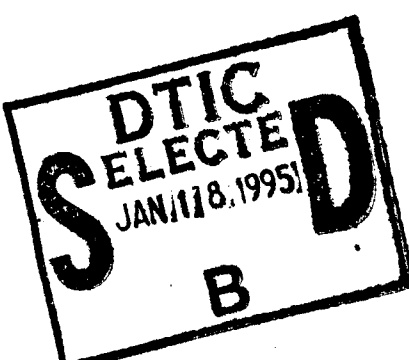


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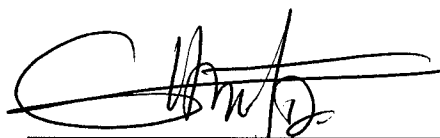
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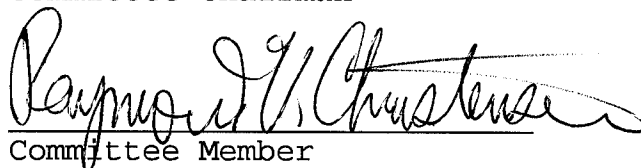
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John M. Busch  
B.A., University of Michigan, 1987

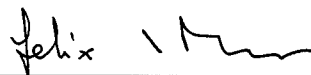
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## INTRODUCTION

The world of international relations is complex and dynamic. There are many players and many cultures coming together to create the world community. When these cultures meet, sometimes relations are peaceful and beneficial to each party. Other times they are hostile and at times violent. One major consideration in international relations is the perception one nation has of another.

The importance of perception in international relations was highlighted by the scholar Robert Jervis. He found that for actors in international politics, perceptions of the world and of other nations in it "diverge from reality" in concrete ways.<sup>1</sup> Misperceptions are formed in many ways, but they may lead to poorly informed decisions by political leaders. Jervis argued that history could teach decision makers to understand other nations better, but "being pragmatic men, decision-makers rarely waste much time over what is

past," and they underestimate the degree to which their interpretations of history are influenced by their pre-existing beliefs.<sup>2</sup>

Economists are continuously studying America's trade relationship with Japan. In this area, experts are debating whether Japan is really different from the rest of the world, or just *perceived* as different. The traditional view held that Japan could be dealt with as any other trading partner. However, the "revisionist" view is that "these differences are so fundamental in the case of Japan that it must be treated differently from all other countries."<sup>3</sup>

Political scientists and economists, while at the forefront of modern international relations, are not alone. Other disciplines join with them into entities known as Area Studies. Research on other nations is conducted in virtually every academic field, and the results are used to teach about other cultures. The experts from a particular region are frequently called on to advise national leaders. The research and the experts have limitations, however. One of the greatest is the manner in which research is conducted.

Individual studies of a portion of a society comprise a body of knowledge which is then used to inform others about that society. This is not to fault the

researcher, but it is simply the most practical way to conduct a study. Milton Singer asserts that, in doing such research, a number of assumptions are inevitable:

1. The influences impinging on a small community from the wider society are so negligible that they can be disregarded or that they can be treated as extraneous "disturbances";
2. What is found to be true of the small community can be projected onto the larger society and culture on the assumption that the small community is "representative" or a microcosm of the larger society; and
3. A civilization consists of a collection of small communities, or if it does not, the small community study at least provides insight into the building blocks of a civilization.<sup>4</sup>

While it would be dangerous to generalize and say all scholarship has fallen prey to the above assumptions, the danger that misperception can occur is increased when one ignores them.

Those people in the field of international relations entrusted to make and enact foreign policy must be aware of their own perceptions of other nations. They must understand, as best they can, the cultures of the nations they deal with. Decisions are made by the national leadership based on the best information available. Issues are debated and discussed, with experts from many fields usually providing guidance and analysis.

In spite of the assistance and teaching by specialists, attitudes and perceptions are not always

accurate; this is true for all fields. It has become pronounced in recent times when considering the relationship between the East and the West. The cultural traditions are so different that accurate description is difficult, and misperceptions have developed.

One of the most important works on this subject is the scholarly work Orientalism by Edward Said. He considered the inherent difficulties a Western scholar has when trying to explain Eastern history and culture. Said, from the Arab world, was primarily concerned with how European "Orientalists" wrote about Southwest Asia. He believes that the language and style of their writing connoted a feeling of power that was rooted in the colonial experiences of the nineteenth century. He extended this belief to the attitude of the scholars and writers saying that they created "Orientals" according to an image of who they wanted them to be.

The Western portrayal of cultural differences inspired Said to write his book; the inevitability of such differences caused his critics to chastise him for lamenting them. David Kopf, in his review of Orientalism for the Journal of Asian Studies, commented on Said's "anger at having been placed, as an 'Oriental,' in the network of Western myths and illusions created out of the East, to satisfy Western psychocultural needs."<sup>5</sup>

However, even these critics acknowledge the danger of stereotyping their Asian subjects, as the quality of their arguments would be degraded.

While Said wrote primarily of the relationship between Europe and the Mid-East, his arguments extend to the relationship of America with the Far East. Even Edwin O. Reischauer, one of leading authorities on Asia in the post-World War II period, was criticized for his "Orientalist" stereotypes.<sup>6</sup> Richard Minear faults Reischauer for being biased, yet Minear himself shows a similar bias. In his review of Orientalism he argued against Said's view of a power relationship. He grants the West the "will to power" and "arrogance and condescension," but not "actual domination."<sup>7</sup> This is an example of a Westerner imposing his own views unrealistically on another culture; here Minear is acting as Said's Orientalist. Many Asians will speak of Western colonial domination of the past, and of American cultural imperialism of the present. The relationship, when viewed from Said's Eastern perspective, was one of domination. Minear discredited that view from his Western perspective, but did not attempt to look at it from the other side. The relationship, through political, cultural, and academic disciplines, has indeed been one in which the West exercised power over the East.

The power that the Americans wield over Asia, at least in their own minds, was frequently manifested in military operations. From Admiral Perry to General MacArthur, the United States military looked on Japan as a nation to be subjugated. Likewise in Korea, an American ship, *The General Sherman*, sailed up the Taedong River to Pyongyang in 1866 in a similar attempt to force open the "Hermit Kingdom." This attitude has, to some extent, continued to the present. In the post-war period, the Americans occupied Japan and Korea and, in some ways, still do. Socialists--and indeed non-Socialist critics of U.S. policy--regularly refer to the Americans as "imperialists."

As a member of the America's armed forces, I am concerned that an Orientalist attitude may still pervade American thinking today. While it may not be as malicious as Said's work assumes, such an attitude could certainly be characterized as arrogant. The attitude stems from Western misperceptions of Asia, and as Korea and Japan become prominent first-world nations, this attitude will become more harmful to relationships with them.

The military relationship between the United States and Northeast Asia has generally been regarded as successful; however, when examined in detail, problems



appear--problems that could have grave consequences for stability in the region. Therefore, in order to call attention to this persistent attitude and to realize possible consequences, this thesis will consider certain aspects of the history of the American military relationship with Northeast Asia. When studied with an understanding of Orientalism, the power dynamics, and the implications of continued Western biases, this military relationship becomes all the more significant--and tenuous.

This thesis will not be a report of the military balance in Korea and Japan. It will not answer questions about the future of the alliances. There are ample sources for such information and predictions. Rather, the purpose here is to review policy decisions which have affected Korea and Japan against the backdrop of allegations of America's "cultural imperialism" of the postwar period.

In this paper the attitude of the West toward the East, whether called Orientalism or arrogance, is presented as one factor which informed decision-making processes in the post-World War II era. There are, of course, many other factors involved. Among them are domestic concerns, fiscal realities, human rights issues, and, until the last few years, Cold War considerations.

These and more have affected the policy decisions of the United States toward Northeast Asia.

Much has been written of the patron/client relationship between the U.S. and her allies;<sup>8</sup> while this may have been appropriate at the end of WWII, it is no longer. The relationships have evolved through the decades and are now between more nearly equal partners; yet the psychology of both patron and client, but especially the former, can outlive the changed relationship. Perceptions, as well as misperceptions, are slow to change, and continuously influence national leaders.

When changes in U.S. policy occur, they are met with resistance. Often times, the changes lead to confusion on the part of the ally. America's decisions have caused much concern and debate in Korea and Japan. This thesis will examine the commentary by Korean and Japanese people, and shed some light onto certain aspects of the modern "Orientalism" espoused by the American military, one which causes the United States to act in ways which it unilaterally deems best for Northeast Asia. These actions suggest a continued power relationship, in which the Oriental is still perceived to be different from, and somewhat lesser than, the Westerner.

There has been much interest in Asian studies in the

West since World War II. The portrayal of the East prompted Edward Said to write Orientalism. This thesis will extend the theme of his work to the American military relationship with Northeast Asia. In examining the decisions made that affected the lives of Koreans and Japanese, I will demonstrate that there is still an element of Orientalism alive today. In doing the preliminary research for this thesis it became evident that little effort has been expended in explaining this aspect of the military relationship the United States has with its Asian allies. The point of this thesis is to make us aware of the Japanese and Korean perspectives and how those feelings might influence our decisions. In this way, perhaps one aspect of Orientalism can be identified, understood, and dealt with.

The scope of this thesis is confined to a specific period of time in order to provide a coherent framework and to limit the paper to manageable length. The research concentrated primarily on the post-Vietnam Era for the United States and Asia, which lends itself to a "modern era" perspective.

There are, of course, limitations inherent in this work. Foremost among them is that research was conducted using only English sources. This affected the breadth of

inclusion of primary sources of information regarding Asian perspective. However, there are journals and papers written in English by Japanese and Korean scholars and politicians, as well as leading Korean and Japanese newspapers published in English, to provide sufficient information to support the argument. (It should be noted that many of these sources were created for an American audience, and thus some of the information may be tempered relative to that produced for a native Asian audience.)

This paper is primarily a historical discussion of two topic areas concerning the American military in Northeast Asia. A chapter discussing Orientalism and the attitude the United States has expressed toward Asia is followed by a chapter on the presence of American forces in Northeast Asia and then a chapter on the presence of American nuclear weapons in the region.

The analysis relies on statements made by Japanese, Korean and American leaders and scholars. The statements are used to demonstrate opinion circulating prominently in the concerned nations and to compare and contrast the motivations of the three nations in their international relations.

### Notes to the Introduction

1. Robert Jervis, Perception and Misperception in International Politics, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 3-4.
2. Ibid., 237.
3. C. Fred Bergsten and Marcus Noland, Reconcilable Differences?: United States-Japan Economic Conflict, (Washington D.C.: Institute for International Economics, 1993), 7.
4. Milton Singer, "Social Anthropology and the Comparative Study of Civilizations," in Ward Morehouse, ed., The Comparative Approach in Area Studies and the Disciplines: Problems of Teaching on Asia, Selected Papers Presented at the Conference on Asian Studies and Comparative Approaches, Dartmouth College, 1965, (New York: University of the State of New York, 1966), 5.
5. David Kopf, "Hermeneutics versus History," Journal of Asian Studies 39, (May, 1980), 495.
6. Richard H. Minear, "Orientalism and the Study of Japan," Journal of Asian Studies 39, (May, 1980), 511-513. Minear quotes several of Reischauer's works, including such characterizations of the Japanese as an "emotional people" and "frequently irrational."
7. Ibid.
8. For example, see Karl Moskowitz, From Patron to Partner: The Development of U.S.-Korean Business and Trade Relations, (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company, 1984) and Chae-jin Lee and Hideo Sato, U.S. Policy Toward Japan and Korea: A Changing Influence Relationship, (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1982).

## CHAPTER I

### The Relationship Between East and West

Edward Said launched an attack on the academic discipline of Oriental studies in his provocative work Orientalism. He denounced the very existence of Orientalists, those Westerners who studied the non-West and defined the "Orient" as different from the West. Said was primarily concerned with the European treatment of the Near East, and generally concerned with the bias inherent in the Orientalists' work. His ideas can be, and indeed have been, extended to other relationships, including the United States and the East Asia. While other scholars have written about this treatment, his book was called the "most spectacular and influential attack upon Orientalism"<sup>1</sup> and it informs much of the discourse between West and East today, not only in academic circles, but in all relations.

The beginnings of Orientalism can be found before Western imperialism. The contact with different

cultures, languages, and religions led to an interesting and curious relationship. Later, as Western imperialism advanced, the West assumed the role of conqueror, subjugating the "less developed" peoples of Southern Asia and Africa. Life in the Orient was so different from that in the West that the only way of telling about it was through what Said called "Orientalism."

To tell someone's story is to define them, and definition requires a basis upon which to build understanding. The Orientalists could only define the Orient in Western terms with which they were familiar. Thus, the Orient was defined and named as something different, something compared and contrasted to that which was known--the West. Michael Dalby, in his review of Orientalism for the Journal of Asian Studies, summarized Said's theme by saying "*Orientalism* is and always has been inconceivable apart from *Orientalists*, who, in manifestly varying styles of their own do all this discovering, classifying, and pronouncing."<sup>2</sup> And this, Said believes, is what developed into the West's rationale for having authority over the Orient.

The relationship between East and West thus evolved into one of the West exerting power over the East. While this domination manifested itself in military and political terms which will be discussed later, it was

more importantly the power to define the Orient itself. The West defined the East, in a unilateral process; the East did not, some say could not, define the West. The power of definition led to unfortunate misrepresentation of the East.

One of the faults of the Orientalist in trying to define Asia was in the lack of clarity in explaining the Orient. Even though the Orientalist did his job as best he could, there was not enough attention paid to finding the true essence of the Oriental. Denis Sinor lamented the "laziness" of the Orientalist which led to misunderstandings about the East. He talked about a "lack of comprehension" because the Western scholar had not tried to find the true history of Asia, just merely the West's impact on Asia. Sinor believed that the impact of the West, due to its relatively short period in Asian history, was of less importance than the Orientalists thought. The results of this mistake are that "an unduly high percentage of Western works focuses on the short period of dominant Western influence and is, in fact, quite often nothing other than the history of Western man in Asia."<sup>3</sup> Sinor's observation was made several years before Said published Orientalism, but certainly the view was one which Said shared.

One Western scholar, Edwin G. Pulleyblank,



recognizing the need to study the East, urged his peers to be aware of the divisions of the world. He challenged historians to study regions outside their specialty; in this way, he hoped to have a global view of the importance of all cultures. While recognizing the difference in cultures across the world, he knew it was important to consider them all on an equal level. Thus, the onus was on the Orientalists to understand Western history as much as it was on the "Westernists" to understand the Orient. According to Pulleyblank, historians should not just "look over the fence," but try to "break it down." He believed the Far East was always a part of the Westerners' world, in both the physical sense of contact, but also in the intrinsic qualities of man. Because "man in China is basically the same as man everywhere else," study of the Easterner is as important to the Western scholar as the study of the West.<sup>4</sup> The danger, however, is in trying to study the unknown without conscious awareness of the inherent biases of the known. Yet there is a certain amount of comfort in the familiar. In studying history with one's own cultural baggage, the observer "will see what he wants, what serves his interests, and what provides reassurance." The Western historians then color the Orient with their own preoccupations, and thus their writing often says

more about themselves than about the "Other" they are trying to portray.<sup>5</sup>

The difficulty of the Orientalist, then, was to try to present Asia to the West without coloring the presentation with Western biases. The task was not easy, as all people are defined by who they are and the culture in which they live. To understand a different culture, one must have a basis on which to build. And so, the Orientalists defined the Orient in terms of difference, comparing the familiar to the unknown. This tendency was not necessarily a bad thing, nor was it wrong. One anthropologist concluded that cultural study "necessarily produces only what that society's internal conditions require it to conceptualize as *other than* itself."<sup>6</sup> Thus, the Orient became known in the West as primitive, undeveloped, less educated, etc. Further, the Orientalists, by the very nature of their discipline, grouped all Asians into one entity. This resulted in the following situation that continues to the present:

In most major universities, the introductory courses that cover Japan have long been part of offerings in East Asian Studies--so-called Rice Paddies 101. Despite its stature as the second largest economy in the world, Japan is introduced to undergraduates alongside China rather than alongside the other advanced industrial nations.<sup>7</sup>

The presentation of the Orient turned all of Asia into a universal entity in need of Western development. The

seeds of Said's "power" were sown. The West assumed authority over the East.

This power was further amplified by the fact that the Western Orientalist had no counterpart in Asia. Said cited this disparity as a reflection of the relative strength of West over East.<sup>8</sup> However, rather than the conscious creation of a superior/inferior relationship, the disparity may have developed from something deeper in the nature of man.

In defense of the Orientalist, the assumption of authority may not be solely the fault of the West, indeed it may not be the fault of anyone. In another author's view, the academic disparity and the ability to define the Orient resulted from *who* the Westerners are versus *who* the Easterners are. Geryke Young, in Race and Civilization: Two Worlds Not one, wrote that the primary difference between East and West has to do with the very essence of people. The Easterner is "self-sufficient, contracting and centripetal, implying a hoarding of power," while the Westerner is "expansive and centrifugal precisely because of the lack of self-sufficiency."<sup>9</sup> He further claimed that the difference was crucial, as it caused and allowed the West to expand, conquer, invade, as well as bring relief, while the "Oriental world in contrast seems one of relativity in that it is a world

where everything minds its own business to the benefit of the whole."<sup>10</sup> That these definitions of East and West would justify colonialism should not be ignored; it was definitions such as these that caused Said and others to lash out against the West. Said and those who agreed with him were troubled that such definitions would even exist, as they gave the West a natural destiny to dominate the East. One can detect the roots of Social Darwinism in these definitions as well.

The need for the West to expand, to discover new horizons, continued into modern times. Even Thomas Merton, the Trappist monk, found the need to go to Asia and discover it for himself. After remaining inside his monastery in Kentucky for twenty five years, he emerged with the desire to meet the people he had written so much about. His book, Zen and the Birds of Appetite, was praised as essays "about complex Asian concepts with a Western directness."<sup>11</sup> He was able to complete the book because "he has not only studied Buddhism from the outside, objectively, but has grasped it by empathy and living participation from within . . ."<sup>12</sup> Somehow, Merton was able to write this well-received book on Asian religion and tradition from within the walls of a monastery in Kentucky, without ever having visited the lands where the religion originated or was practiced!

Attesting to Merton's wisdom, his first major trip after the end of his hermitage was to Asia, to find the roots of his subject. He believed that the problems of the modern world required the universalization of all people through real communication between East and West.<sup>13</sup> Sadly, Merton died only two months into his pilgrimage. He did, however, succeed in overcoming Said's lament only two days before his death. He viewed some particularly beautiful Buddhist statues in Thailand and, coupling the experience with that of meeting the Dalai Lama, he was moved to conclude:

This is Asia in its purity, not covered over with garbage, Asian or European, or American, and it is clear, pure, complete. It says everything, it needs nothing. It can afford to be silent, unnoticed, undiscovered. It does not need to be discovered. It is we, Asians included, who need to discover it.<sup>14</sup>

Merton had discovered what he felt was the true "Orient," and instead of defining it, he directed everyone to discover it on their own. Westerners and Easterners alike had the need to find out what Asia was without their cultural baggage, not to describe it through Orientalist eyes, not to define it with Orientalist words.

One fault with Merton's experience was that he fell into the trap of wanting to discover "Asia," this entity that encompassed all people on the continent. Even his

primary mission of religious pilgrimage should have presented him with many different perspectives, for "Asian" Buddhism is as varied as the cultures that practice it. So, in Merton's personal experience he was able to find what he was looking for, but he observed one corner of Asia and believed he had discovered "Asia" in its universality. Again, a Westerner had missed the point that the Orient is an assortment of different cultures, some as different from each other as East is from West. To his credit, however, Merton came the closest of any of his contemporaries to overcoming "Orientalism," even if he was not completely able to do it. Unfortunately, the eloquence and wisdom of Thomas Merton are not found in many others, and thus the relationship which Said lashed out against continues on. The power of West over East, begun hundreds of years ago, has continued.

The publication of Said's Orientalism and subsequent books on the topic have led to a sensitivity on the part of Orientalists to not be labelled as such, because the label carries with it the subliminal accusation of racism. For historians, this means feeling "obliged to show their freedom from this sin, from this Western want to view and discuss the Other through an inherited grid of Eurocentric bias and prejudice."<sup>15</sup>

In addition to the resentment shown by Asians writing about Orientalism, there are feelings expressed outside of historiography. Some of the feelings are the remnants of the colonial mindset; others are the result of the Western media's portrayal of the East. There were, and are, many racial problems between Americans and mid-Easterners. As recently as the Persian Gulf War, it was revealed how little mainstream America knew about the differences among Islamic people. Discrimination against all mid-Easterners was prevalent during that period. The feelings brought back memories of the treatment of Asians by America during World War II.

Touching on this sensitive subject, John Dower discussed the importance of racism in international relations. In a sense, he was talking about Orientalism, an "us" versus "them" mentality where it is the differences among men that allowed the Pacific War to progress as it did and created the hatred between the Americans and the Japanese.

During the war, national loyalist tendencies informed some of the racism, because the Pacific enemy was of a different race. These feelings ran deep in the American people, throughout all levels of society. Dower even contended that they reached the President of the United States and found a "rising 'color consciousness'

that seemed to be creating an insurmountable barrier between Oriental and Occidental Peoples."<sup>16</sup>

While racism and cultural bias were prevalent, some of the attitudes continue today. As will be discussed below, perceptions go both ways, and the impression of the West in the East is not always favorable. In fact, the resentment built up against the Orientalists can be found at the personal level as well. This resentment is toward a Western "arrogance" and tendency to judge other societies by its own standards. There is also a feeling that the West expects all others to want to become "Western." The accusation is that the West

disparages those who, given the chance, want to be other than Western--such people must be, the Western logic goes, "fanatical" or the tools of others (the Russians, most often).<sup>17</sup>

In the present day, the term "cultural imperialism" is often used to describe this "arrogance," in that America seems to want to project its own form of democracy and modern lifestyle upon Asian nations. While the accusation is subjective and can be debated, the feelings of the Asians are real. These feelings limit the success of this "cultural imperialism" and, as Denis Sinor commented in 1970, were it not for its military strength and technological superiority, the Americans would probably not have had much impact on Asia at all. He cited the lack of agricultural transfer, the continued



use of chopsticks, and the rejection of yeast breads as proof of his beliefs, and also noted that the "Christian influence remains minimal."<sup>18</sup> In recent years the cultural transfer has become more noticeable, but the overall impact of American cultural imperialism has been less than it may appear.

The Japanese have also practiced a form of Orientalism: they studied the Other within Asia. After the successful campaign against Russia in 1904-5, Japan was applauded by all the East for standing up to the West. As Arab scholar Nirad Chaudhuri wrote:

After the Japanese victory we felt an immense elation, a sort of reassurance in the face of the Europeans, and an immense sense of gratitude and hero-worship for the Japanese.<sup>19</sup>

However, subsequent actions by the Japanese turned the favorable impressions around, and Japan became feared in Asia. The Japanese became possessed of their own "Orientalist" views as they looked toward the rest of Asia. Pan-Asian unity was a "myth", and in the end, "their own oppressive behavior toward other Asians earned the Japanese more hatred than support."<sup>20</sup> The Japanese further offended their Asian neighbors by declaring themselves "self-designated leaders of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere."<sup>21</sup> Dower explained how the Japanese were able to use the racial troubles within the United States to gain an advantage with other Asian

nations:

The Japanese, acutely sensitive to "color" issues from an entirely different perspective, exploited every display of racial conflict in the United States in their appeals to other Asians (while necessarily ignoring the white supremacy of their German ally). . . . [T]he oppression of blacks and the exclusion of Asian immigrants became political issues in wartime America.<sup>22</sup>

The Japanese were able to gain favor with the other Asian nations by using the color issue. When the Japanese were working to remove the Western colonial powers from the Pacific, they justified their actions by saying they "did not invade independent countries in Southern Asia," but rather "invaded colonial outposts which the Westerners had dominated for generations."<sup>23</sup> But while dispelling the Western imperialists, the Japanese were sometimes worse. The atrocities by the Japanese included:

dominating the political scene, taking over local economies, imposing broad programs of "Japanization," slapping non-Japanese in public, torturing and executing dissidents, exploiting native labor so severely that between 1942 and 1945 the death toll among such workers numbered in the hundreds of thousands.<sup>24</sup>

Thus, in the eyes of other Asians, the Japanese had sunk to the level of the Americans from whom they professed to be saving those Asians. In fact, in many opinions, the Japanese were the most hated enemy in the world, surpassing even the Nazis. As John Dower related, "Commentator after commentator in the Anglo-American camp

stated flatly that the Japanese were more despised than the Germans. . . ."25 They held to a cultural and racial superiority over the West and other Asians. Like the West, they

became entangled in a web of contradictions: creating new colonial hierarchies while preaching liberation; singing the glories of their unique Imperial Way while professing to support a broad and all-embracing Pan-Asianism.<sup>26</sup>

In the postwar era, possible proof of the allegations of Orientalism against the United States may be found in the Americans' decision to ally closely with Japan in spite of its record in Asia. To hinge the United States' security on the only Asian nation to have westernized to an appreciable extent belies some level of indifference to the concerns of the other Asians. One must keep in mind, of course, that major foreign policy decisions such as this require attention to many concerns, and so the feelings of other Asians may not have been a major factor. Also, in spite of Japan's exploits during the war, the rest of Asia continued to look up to her, and though they feared her economic power in the postwar era, they continued to be "impressed by Japan's success in competing not only with the Europeans but even with the formidable Americans."<sup>27</sup>

The Japanese practiced their own form of "reverse Orientalism," a deeply-rooted cultural trait. In Japan,

the concept of the Insider/Outsider is well known. It is sometimes called "groupism" in that the outsider does not belong to the group and therefore is treated as lesser by those within the group. In a more personal way, this idea is extended to the concepts of "Self" versus "Other." The Other was thought of as an animal spirit or a demon, something other than human.<sup>28</sup> The 16th and 17th century Europeans who ventured to Japan were called "evil" and considered "tricky" by the Japanese. They were outsiders, the Other, not to be trusted. This idea led to the wartime propaganda in Japan of depicting the Americans as beasts and demons. It is important to remember that even though these cultural attributes have been applied to other Asian societies with Confucian traditions, the other Asians themselves were also considered outsiders by the Japanese.<sup>29</sup>

Dower believes that these attitudes of arrogance and latent racism still exist, even though they seemed to quickly disappear in the postwar period. One possible reason for the rapid decline in race hatred during the Occupation of Japan was that the stereotypes were just wrong. Once the Americans and the Japanese were working together, they learned more about each other and could understand their differences.<sup>30</sup> However, the Americans managed to maintain an air of superiority, even if it was

somewhat subtle. Noting the Occupation authorities' description of Japan as a "good pupil," Dower claims "such paternalism was unquestionably the essence of MacArthur's attitude toward the Japanese--and Oriental people in general."<sup>31</sup>

This racism, this paternalism, is important to keep in mind, as it can still exist today in the Asian-American relationship. It has been said that this "residual racism" exists today as "muted undertones" and is present on

all sides in the postwar relationship between the former belligerents, and it is predictable that harsher racist attitudes reminiscent of the war years will again arise at times of heightened competition or disagreement.<sup>32</sup>

This statement was born out by the modern era attitudes as the economic relationship with Japan and political relationship with Korea grew tense. The tensions between East and West were heightened as a result of the Nixon Doctrine and Nixon's controversial China policy. While it is given that there are tensions among the four powers in Northeast Asia (the United States, the former Soviet Union, China, and Japan) and the other nations, actions such as the Nixon Doctrine only "exacerbated rather than diminished"<sup>33</sup> these tensions.

One of the reasons that the West, and America in particular, is not better respected by the East is that

the West is blamed for actions and policies that have led to "one of the great tragedies of contemporary Asia," the divided countries. While it is true these divisions have led to conflict, the concern is that they "remain the tinder boxes for future wars." The United States must bear a heavy share of the responsibility for these divisions.<sup>34</sup>

As the United States receded from Asia in accordance with the Nixon Doctrine, Japan stepped in and reinforced the divisions by economically supporting Taiwan, South Korea, and South Vietnam.<sup>35</sup> The United States must be careful of falling prey to the following situation:

It is axiomatic in traditional power politics that smaller countries become pawns. . . . [W]hen a great power such as the United States shapes its policy with a myopic fixation upon American "interests" and power "realities," the people of those weaker nations become expendable.<sup>36</sup>

For these smaller nations of Asia, American policies have caused a situation where instead of allowing them to develop on their own, these nations have been "perhaps completely prevented from shaping their own destinies."<sup>37</sup> Dower provided further admonishment of the United States when he said:

The United States and the world have gained neither peace nor freedom nor stability nor well-being, but rather the terrible distortions of American and international society today. Yet the lessons drawn by American policy makers remain technocratic ones, and power issues

rather than human issues continue to guide policy.<sup>38</sup>

Even though these "distortions" were most evident in the early 1970s, they still exist in today's world--witness the divided Korea which remains. While it is important to avoid "myopic" policies, the danger of the opposite extreme is also real. In the Social Sciences, in response to the accusations of Orientalism, some may have gone too far the other way and have become clients of a foreign land. Critics charge that the experts have grown unwilling to offend the societies which they study, and instead try to "justify the actions" of the people and thus have "ceased to be detached scholars and critics."<sup>39</sup> In fact, Richard Samuels found that the attitude of the scholars changed with the political climate:

The intellectual history of Japanese political studies in this country reflects closely the changes in the foreign relations of the United States and Japan. The predominant images of Japan in the U.S. have been positive when U.S.-Japan relations have been friendly and have turned critical when the relationship has been more adversarial.<sup>40</sup>

What this means for American foreign policy experts is that they need to adopt a coherent Asian policy and stand by it. The policy should be one that is concerned about all of Asia, its whole and its constituent parts, and can withstand changes in administrations. The Asians, for their part, can be faulted for blaming the

United States for all their troubles, as many Asian leaders "privately fault some of their American counterparts for exhibiting insufferable arrogance." This leads them to act as if "all substantive geopolitical decisions were still made in Washington and all significant economic deals were still consummated on Wall Street."<sup>41</sup>

Robert Oxnam proposed a solution to the problem of Orientalism in the East-West relationship. He said that experts on both sides of the Pacific called for paying more attention to the impact bilateral decisions have on third parties. This is crucial, because although "multilateralism is given lip service, myopic bilateralism can still produce surprises, shocks, and damages." Additionally, most Asian countries feel slighted by the attention the United States pays to Japan and China, while ignoring the rest. The "sense of being snubbed" leads to anti-Americanism. While a completely equal and multilateral diplomacy is impossible, experts say the "avoidance of insult should be a high priority."<sup>42</sup>

The accusation of "myopic bilateralism" would appear to be the opposite of "Orientalism." Where the former concept is a one-on-one relationship, the latter is one-on-all. If the United States and other Western nations



view Asia as a collective entity, as Said alleged, then how does bilateralism develop? When the United States interacts with one Asian nation, but does not consider the impact on other Asian nations, the latter may be insulted. The disregard for the other nations is, in some measure, the result of Orientalism.

The lack of understanding of how Asian nations are intertwined and affect each other is the result of thinking of them as "all the same." The West has never really considered Asian countries as individual nations; therefore Asia is not truly known. (There are notable exceptions which arise during wartime.) This is evident in the actions of the American government, and in particular, the military policies pertaining to Northeast Asia.

Let me now turn to an examination of the impact which Sinor mentioned, that the most influence the United States exerted in East Asia was due to military presence, not cultural interaction. Where Orientalism as a concept in the academic world has been debated, it will be traced in the following chapters through a postwar history of American military involvement.

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## CHAPTER II

### U.S. Military Personnel in Northeast Asia

In contrast to the carefully prepared, well-staffed, and relatively successful, if not always consistent, occupation policies in Japan, U.S. postwar policy with regard to the Korean peninsula was largely improvised, deflected by misconceptions, and filled with frustrations.<sup>1</sup>

This statement reflects the difference in strategic importance of Japan and Korea to the United States. This difference has been evident throughout the post-war period. There has not been a coherent, all-encompassing foreign policy by the United States for Northeast Asia. This is evidenced in many ways, such as Nixon's China policy and the derecognition of Taiwan. One of the easiest ways to recognize the inconsistencies in U.S. policy is to study the military policies toward America's allies in the region.

This chapter consists of two historical surveys. The first is concerned with United States military policies toward the Republic of Korea. The discussion

focuses on the contradictions of successive administrations with regard to maintaining a military presence on the peninsula. These changes reflect the level of commitment by the United States for Asia. The military forces in Korea represent the only American forces on the mainland of Asia, and as such are symbolically important as testimony to the United States' commitment to defending democracy in Asia. That such dramatic changes in policy could occur at all suggests that there has been no guiding strategy for Korea--only reactions to domestic pressures and international situations.

The second part of this chapter concerns the American military commitment to Japan. In discussing the pertinent issues of burdensharing and the reversion of control of Okinawa in 1972, what should become apparent is the lack of debate over the presence of American military forces. There has never been a legitimate call for total withdrawal by either the United States or Japan, nor has one been attempted. Rather, the government officials were concerned with how the Americans would allow Japan to develop its own military capabilities. In contrast to the Korean policies, Washington's policy for Japan has been one of constant commitment, with the relationship maturing and adapting

as Japan developed through the post-war period.

The two historical discussions, when taken together, reflect the lack of a coherent and comprehensive Northeast Asian foreign policy by the United States. This problem is amplified by the Orientalist views of the United States: That the stationing of troops on Asian soil is ostensibly for the security of Korea and Japan, but is actually to serve the needs of the United States. Thus, while short-term policies change with the politicians in Washington, the overall lack of long-term policy has been blamed for the Korean War, and has caused other destabilizing periods where confusing signals may have been sent to adversaries. At the very least, the lack of a consistent policy has been the cause of mistrust and disappointment for America's allies.

The United States military first appeared on the Korean peninsula as an occupation force after the defeat of the Japanese. Initially, the United States forces were there to accept the surrender of the Japanese south of the 38th parallel and oversee the orderly withdrawal of Japanese military personnel and equipment. Having accomplished that, the occupation force remained until the establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948, with Syngman Rhee as its first president. Debate ensued over



the planned withdrawal of the United States forces.

General John R. Hodge commanded the XXIV Corps of the United States Army, the occupation force, and also led the United States Army Military Government in Korea (USAMGIK), an interim government established to assist development of Korea's own government. Despite friction between Gen. Hodge and Syngman Rhee, which Hodge described as "bitter hatred" by Rhee and his wife toward him<sup>2</sup>, a withdrawal plan was successfully negotiated between the two countries. The reasons for the United States' decision were summed up by a Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) study and policy letter in 1948. They concluded that the:

1. US has little strategic interest in maintaining the present troops and bases in Korea.
2. The forces now deployed in Korea are sorely needed elsewhere . . .
3. . . . present information indicates that withdrawal of US forces will probably result in communist domination . . . eventual domination of Korea by the USSR will have to be accepted as a probability if US troops are withdrawn.<sup>3</sup>

This withdrawal, while in the strategic interests of the United States, went against the wishes of the Koreans in the south, who feared the communists and their military power. On Nov 22, 1948, the South Korean executive branch passed a resolution asking the US to "postpone the withdrawal of the US troops now in South

Korea." The South Korean Assembly also passed a resolution to the same effect.<sup>4</sup> The United States essentially ignored their pleas. The results of the withdrawal were what the South Koreans feared most. As the Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services of the US House of Representatives found in their 1978 report on a similar initiative by President Carter, "Review of the Policy Decision to Withdraw United States Forces From Korea":

After establishment of the Republic of Korea in 1948, the withdrawal of US occupation forces was completed in June 1949. The withdrawal of US military support from the ROK provided the opportunity for Kim Il Sung to seek forcibly to unite the two Koreas. In June 1950, he began that effort with a massive surprise attack on the ROK.<sup>5</sup>

Much has been written about Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson's line drawn in the ocean during his January 12, 1950, speech to the Press Club in Washington, seeming to exclude Korea and Taiwan from the United States' defense perimeter.<sup>6</sup> While this may have given reassurance to Kim Il Sung that the United States would not come to South Korea's defense, one foreign affairs analyst said the mistake was in the United States' underestimating the importance of Korea to Japan's security:

Because Japan was a plum, ripe for picking by the Soviet Union, it had become the focus of Washington's concerns. The crucial U.S. error was a failure to consider Korea's importance to

the defense of Japan, a task to which the United States had fallen heir . . . To adhere to the Acheson statement would have jeopardized Japan's security directly . . . What is eminently clear is that, despite much of Washington's rhetoric (which was understandable because of the need to generate domestic support for the war), the United States did not participate in the Korean War to protect Korean independence and freedom so much as to protect global U.S. interests, as represented by Japan.<sup>7</sup>

What became clear after the United States committed to defending South Korea was that views in Washington had changed from those espoused in 1948; the United States would remain on the peninsula until the South's security was assured. Whether this was for the defense of Korea for its own sake or to ensure the security of Japan was less important to the Koreans at the time than the actual change in perspective. However, as time has passed, the South Koreans have become more aware of their place in the United States security policy for the region. As South Korea advanced toward being one the leading economic nations, their place in American foreign policy has led to some bitterness. The United States was not concerned with the perceptions of the Koreans in the 1950s, and that has been slow to change.

Following the signing of the Armistice in 1953, the United States began a withdrawal of most of the ground forces present in Korea. President Eisenhower's vision for the U.S. military in the Pacific region was a "highly

mobile naval, air and amphibious" presence, and he expected the United States to be able to "oppose aggression with even greater effect than heretofore."<sup>8</sup> This strategy was supposed to reassure the Koreans that even though the United States forces were leaving, the peninsula would still be protected by the United States. This reassurance represents a stark change in attitude from that of President Truman's administration before the Korean War.

The policy of the United States in and for Korea had three main concerns:

- (1) The security of the ROK against new hostilities, including any that might be provoked by rash South Korean initiatives;
- (2) Reconstruction of the economy; and
- (3) Development of a free, representative, and stable government.<sup>9</sup>

Further,

Growing out of these concerns was the desire that Korea and Japan normalize relations . . . The United States was determined to ensure the security of the ROK against attack. Korean security during this period was bolstered by the Mutual Defense Treaty, the presence of sizable numbers of U.S. troops, and large amounts of U.S. military assistance.<sup>10</sup>

While seeking to maintain and enforce this policy and these concerns, the United States withdrew most of the forces which had entered Korea to fight in the war. During the period of 1954-1955, the United States

withdrew five Army divisions and one Marine division. This withdrawal was possible because of the removal of 200,000 Chinese troops from North Korea and a promised \$700 million assistance program from the United States.<sup>11</sup>

What remained of the U.S. forces in Korea was some 60,000 personnel, including two army divisions and one air division. These forces remained steady until the end of the 1960s. In the meantime, significant changes occurred in South Korean politics and diplomacy: The coups by General Park and normalization of relations with Japan. While these events and others caused turmoil for the South Koreans, the presence and commitment of the United States military lent stability to the peninsula:

It has been a tenet of U.S. policy makers that conflict could be deterred by a proper balance of forces on the peninsula. The balance, since the Korean war, included a large U.S. military presence, under the aegis of the U.N. Command. U.S. forces in Korea were, however, just one factor, though a key one, which contributed to deterring a North Korean attack. Other important factors were the relative military strengths of North and South Korea and the strength of additional U.S. forces outside of Korea which probably would be introduced into any conflict.

U.S. forces also served to deter the ROK from attacking or being provoked to attack, the DPRK. Further, the presence of U.S. forces in South Korea assured Japan of the constancy of its security relationship with the United States. As long as there was no question of the U.S. commitment to defend South Korea, little doubt existed among the Japanese as to the strength of U.S.-Japanese mutual defense arrangements. Thus, the United States acted as a stabilizing force in the region.<sup>12</sup>

With the advent of the Nixon (Guam) Doctrine for Asia, the military balance shifted once again. While Nixon was in Asia in 1967 he "emphasized the need to reduce commitments of ground troops in Asia and to reevaluate relations with the People's Republic of China."<sup>13</sup> Later in 1967, he said:

One of the legacies of Vietnam almost certainly will be a deep reluctance on the part of the United States to become involved once again in a similar intervention on a similar basis. . . . [T]he central pattern of the future in U.S.-Asian relations must be American support for Asian initiatives.<sup>14</sup>

The doctrine evolved into three main tenets:

(1) The United States would honor its treaty commitments;

(2) The United States would provide a shield if a nuclear power threatened the freedom of certain nations;

and

(3) In cases of certain other types of aggression, the United States would furnish military and economic assistance when requested and appropriate, but nations directly threatened should assume primary responsibility for their own defense.<sup>15</sup>

This policy has been studied at great length, and is almost always mentioned as one of the reasons why East Asian allies sensed a reduction in U.S. commitment to their security.<sup>16</sup> The doctrine implicitly called for a reduction of military forces in Asia and explicitly called for the Asian countries to provide more of their

own defense.

For Korea, the Nixon Doctrine had the significant impact of a phased reduction plan for U.S. forces in Korea:

By the late 1960s, plans were made for withdrawing U.S. ground troops from the ROK, with the total withdrawal ultimately scheduled for the 1980s. Given a reduced ground presence, the United States has been and intends to contribute to the military balance on the peninsula by means of the Mutual Defense Treaty, further modernization of Korean forces, and development of ROK defense industries.<sup>17</sup>

While most of the justification in the United States for the withdrawal centered on the Nixon Doctrine in the late 1960s, there were discussions about such action as early as 1963.<sup>18</sup> According to a report by a Congressional Subcommittee investigating Korean-American relations, Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, in 1966,

expressed concern that U.S. troop strength was out of proportion to the Pentagon's perception of the threat from North Korea and that South Korea was sufficiently strong to assume a greater role in its own defense. For those and also budgetary reasons, he proposed a troop withdrawal.<sup>19</sup>

The Ambassador to Korea and his deputy in the late 1960's also wanted to begin a troop withdrawal, but due to South Korea's participation in the Vietnam War, decided against publicly suggesting a plan.<sup>20</sup>

There were some Americans who were against a reduction, fearing North Korea more than those above.

The United States Commander in Korea, General Charles Bonesteel "felt the United States was being lulled into a false sense of security by the reduction in North Korean hostilities" and he "firmly opposed any troop reduction."<sup>21</sup> Secretary of State Dean Rusk agreed with him, especially while South Korea's troops were fighting in Vietnam.

The informal discussions grew into an extremely thorough study by the State Department and the National Security Council. Based on the study, President Nixon elected to remove one division of 20,000 ground forces. The study proposed a \$200 million per year military assistance program for South Korea, and reported the need for developing a long-term plan for U.S. forces in Korea.

The reduction in forces from Korea had several implications beyond the security of South Korea. For the United States, the decision to withdraw some of the troops from Korea

related directly to efforts to disengage from Vietnam . . . in order for the United States to remove itself from Vietnam without appearing to retreat, it had to be able to say that the Guam doctrine applied to all of Asia. The foremost reason for the timing of the reduction was to legitimize the Guam doctrine, and Korea seemed the best possibility for implementing the doctrine outside Vietnam.<sup>22</sup>

The American government was said to be using the reduction in Korea as a way of saving face on the



international scene. A retreat from Vietnam would be devastating the superpower's reputation. By making a simultaneous reduction elsewhere in Asia, the United States could, at least publicly, state that the removal of forces from Vietnam was not in defeat, but required by a new foreign policy.

The provocative idea proposed reflects a lack of concern for Korean and Japanese security for their own sake. If the two nations were vital to American security and stopping the spread of communism, why would they be dealt with so superficially when domestic politics took precedence? The impact of the reduction via the Nixon Doctrine described below indicates the importance of considering the nations where policy decisions take effect. It is such shortsighted ventures which led Asians to lash out against the West and complain of "Orientalist" views.

In South Korea, the reduction of forces allegedly caused President Park to clamp down in an authoritarian manner. The change in U.S. policy was used by President Park Chung Hee as one justification for imposing martial law on October 17, 1972. He was trying to find some way of staying in power, and cited the declining U.S. commitment as a reason for him to take action to stabilize the country. The Nixon Doctrine, coupled with

the withdrawal from Vietnam and the new U.S. policy toward China, caused President Park to "have felt increasingly . . . that Korea would not be able to rely on the United States in the future as it had in the past."<sup>23</sup> In response to this perceived reduction in the U.S. commitment, he tried to "put Korea's domestic political situation in order--'to clean up democracy,' as one foreign observer put it--so that he could do what he thought best."<sup>24</sup>

The reaction from the Korean people was one of betrayal and disappointment, feeling that the United States was going to abandon them again as it did in 1948-49. The Americans had promised in the mid-1960s that they would not reduce troop levels in Korea since Korea agreed to send a contingent of troops to Vietnam. In 1965, General Dwight Beach, United States Commander in Korea, and Ambassador Winthrop Brown told the Koreans "the US decision that there would be no reduction in US force levels remained unchanged," and "no US troops would be withdrawn without prior consultation with the Republic of Korea."<sup>25</sup> Further, both President Lyndon Johnson and Vice President Hubert Humphrey, on separate occasions in 1966, reassured the South Koreans that there would be no troop reduction. The advent of the Nixon doctrine caused a stir among South Koreans. They feared that a reduction

would lead to a total pullout of the troops, and that the United States felt South Korea was not strategically important enough to warrant the stationing of troops. Eventually, the Koreans accepted the reduction as a *fait accompli* and moved to negotiate as best they could. The pullout of the US Army 7th Infantry Division, and the relief of the 2nd Infantry Division from the DMZ was accomplished in 1971.<sup>26</sup> From that point on, there were some 40,000 United States military personnel aiding the defense of South Korea. That number has remained relatively constant until the present.

In the following years, debate over withdrawal subsided, and efforts were expended in improving the South Korean military and defense industry. There was still the nagging suspicion that the Americans would leave someday, even though that day was now put off into the future. President Ford took measures to calm the Korean fears, meeting with President Park Chung Hee in Seoul in 1974. There he told President Park that he had "no plan to reduce the present level of United States forces in Korea."<sup>27</sup> One change seemed to ensure the continued presence for some time to come. To coincide with the redeployment of the 2nd Infantry Division away from the DMZ, a new defense plan was created. In 1974, General Richard Stillwell, Commander of U.S. Forces in

Korea, developed a forward defense concept designed to defeat a North Korean invasion before it reached Seoul. To accomplish this goal, additional South Korean troops were moved forward toward the DMZ and defense lines were reinforced. This new concept was in stark contrast to the previous plan which envisioned a temporary loss of Seoul, then a counterattack recapturing the capital city.<sup>28</sup> The new concept reflected "Seoul's vital importance as the economic and population center of the country."<sup>29</sup>

This new plan, designed to strengthen South Korea's defenses after the loss of the 7th U.S. Infantry, required several key elements: "reinforced defensive positions, massive firepower, mobility, excellent communications, tactical air support, better air defense and substantial warning time before an attack."<sup>30</sup> Since many of these requirements were fulfilled by the United States, the American forces became even more vital to South Korea's defense than before even though they were now in the rear area. This resulted in U.S. I Corps Commander Lt. Gen. John Cushman's assessment to the Committee on Foreign Relations, that "Removal of the 2d Division requires major ROK improvements."<sup>31</sup>

Additionally, the United States forces played an important psychological deterrent role, even in their

reserve posture. The Americans have been called a "tripwire", since they would be involved in fighting before a decision to withdraw them could be made. The message for the North Koreans was that any involvement of U.S. personnel would lead to a massive influx of reinforcements and a major commitment from the United States. Given these roles, the South Koreans felt confident that the Americans would keep the forces on the peninsula.

In the meantime, the South Koreans were trying to improve their own defenses in case the United States further reduced its commitment. The presence of the U.S. forces is sometimes blamed for the lack of South Korean force improvement prior to the reduction by the Nixon Administration, as the Americans provided a crutch. One Korean military leader, Col. Suk-Bok Lee, wrote:

Fortunately, the U.S. withdrawal forced the ROK government and the soldiers of the ROK forces to realize the importance of self reliance. As an aftermath of the withdrawal, they began to think about Korean-style tactics, fostering the military economy, producing a weapon system and a defense policy.<sup>32</sup>

South Korea also gained valuable military experience in Vietnam. This, coupled with its improving economy, gave the Koreans some confidence in themselves. This was important to the South Koreans as they learned "when faced with inconsistent U.S. foreign policies, the most

precious lesson that self-reliance was the only way to survive."<sup>33</sup> It was important to note, however, that the planners of the 1971 reduction expected another reduction to follow. It was delayed because of the need for more modernization of the South Korean forces.

A new American call for withdrawal from Korea was initiated in the political arena in 1975. When President Carter was campaigning for the presidency, he told the Washington Post that he "favored withdrawing troops from Korea and would be prepared to begin as soon as he became president."<sup>34</sup> At other times during the campaign and after being elected, he repeated his plan to "withdraw all of our troops and land forces from Korea."<sup>35</sup> When he formally announced the decision on May 5, 1977, the President's plan "represented an extension of an already well-established trend."<sup>36</sup> The United States had been slowly reducing forces in Asia, and President Carter was looking to complete the withdrawal.

Even though this was, in reality, a continuation of the Nixon Doctrine, the Koreans were again disappointed in the United States. According to a Congressional report by Senators Hubert Humphrey and John Glenn, the "initial South Korean reaction to President Carter's March 9 (1977) statement pledging withdrawal in 4 to 5 years was one of alarm."<sup>37</sup> President Carter revealed his

lack of sensitivity to the Asian situation at the time. By speaking out as bluntly as he did, he caused severe damage to the relationship.

Members of the United States military and congress reviewed the decision in great detail. At issue was why the forces needed to be withdrawn and the impact such a act would have on stability in the region. The first concern was how President Carter came to his decision, and whether he consulted any of his security advisors. Specifically in regard to the military, a congressional investigations subcommittee found:

At no time during these meetings were the JCS asked to comment on the military effect of the President's withdrawal decision. The Presidential Review Memorandum (PRM) 13 of January 26, 1977, requested the Joint Chiefs to examine possible courses of action for the withdrawal of U.S. military ground forces from Korea.<sup>38</sup>

After the initial turmoil settled, the Joint Chiefs and members of Congress prevailed upon President Carter to move slowly. The President slowed the pace of the withdrawal in April, 1978, in response to

strong expressions of Congressional concern over the wisdom of (1) according priority in the early phases of the program to the removal of combat rather than support personnel, and of (2) proceeding with the withdrawal program in the absence of (a) appropriate reciprocal actions by North Korea, and (b) firm assurances that compensatory U.S. measures to the ROK could be undertaken in a timely and proper fashion.<sup>39</sup>

In addition to Congressional pressure, Carter heard from the Japanese, who were concerned about their own security and the dangers posed by a renewed Korean war. The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister both publicly expressed their apprehension about the future defense of South Korea and indirectly cautioned Carter against a drastic policy shift on Korea. The Vice Minister of Defense, Maruyama Takashi, declared:

. . . if Carter withdrew forces from South Korea, the move would destroy the cornerstone of Japan's defense program, thus necessitating the complete rethinking of Japan's security policy.<sup>40</sup>

There were additional statements by Japanese officials, including a former Defense Minister, Prime Minister Fukuda Takeo, and members of the Diet. In 1979, Fukuda had a 40-minute meeting where he briefed President Carter on the South Korean situation and reportedly asked Carter to avoid a "wholesale pullout" from Korea.<sup>41</sup> How much influence these protests had on President Carter is unclear, but certainly they received some attention.

The turning point in Carter's mind seemed to be the reassessment of North Korea's military capabilities. The president initially believed the South Korean forces had been improved sufficiently to counter an attack mounted from the North. However, intelligence reassessments of the threat from North Korea had a large impact on the



President's decision:

. . . the administration's initial confidence that ROK ground forces could halt an invasion by North Korean forces unassisted directly by either the USSR or the PRC may not be warranted. The possibility that North Korea may now have--or perceive that it has--sufficient military resources to undertake a successful invasion of the ROK without the direct support or participation of China or the Soviet Union cannot be discounted; in the face of such a possibility, the deterrent value of maintaining U.S. ground combat troops in Korea takes on added significance.<sup>42</sup>

Other issues that concerned Congress and the military were the costs involved, the increased risk to any U.S. personnel remaining in Korea, and the possibility of nuclear proliferation. The costs of the withdrawal were estimated by the Defense Department to amount to between \$1.5 and \$2.4 billion. There was also no plan to recoup these savings from the planned redeployment of the forces as they were removed.<sup>43</sup> Since the plan called for leaving thousands of Air Force operational personnel and Army support personnel in Korea, reflecting a "conscious U.S. decision to maintain its traditional broad commitment to the defense of South Korea . . . it is probable that U.S. forces would incur immediate and substantial casualties in the event of a North Korean invasion. . . ." <sup>44</sup> Additionally, given the United States' concerns for nuclear non-proliferation in Asia, the withdrawal decision seemed to work against

established foreign policy. A 1979 Congressional study group headed by Senator Sam Nunn did "not believe that a continuation of the Administration's troop withdrawal program as scheduled, especially in the absence of reciprocal North Korean measures, advances this policy" of non-proliferation.<sup>45</sup> In fact, the group found that in the minds of U.S. and Korean experts the withdrawal "could contribute to an erosion of existing ROK confidence on U.S. reliability and increase Korean pressure to develop nuclear weapons of their own."<sup>46</sup> One member of the study group, Senator Gary Hart, who generally agreed with the findings of the group, felt that "neither the retention nor the eventual withdrawal of the 2d Division is likely to affect greatly the military balance on the peninsula in terms of actual ground forces," calling for more South Korean actions such as an increase in its defense spending and manpower.<sup>47</sup>

In the face of this extensive debate, the Carter plan was modified. Before the United States could complete a total withdrawal, the Americans changed administrations and Korean policy. In the early Reagan years, the United States made several reassurances to Korea that the troops would stay. In a joint communique of the 13th Annual ROK-US Security Consultative Meeting

in 1981, the two sides agreed that "the security of the Republic of Korea is pivotal to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia and in turn, vital to the security of the United States."<sup>48</sup> In respect to the vital nature of peace in Korea,

The two delegations welcomed President Reagan's assurance in February, 1981 that the United States had no plans to withdraw U.S. ground combat forces from the Republic of Korea and agreed that it not only provides tangible evidence of the United States' firm resolve to help defend the Republic of Korea, but will make a significant contribution to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia.<sup>49</sup>

While this new policy came as a relief to the Koreans, the effects of Carter's actions lingered on. One Korean military officer later wrote ". . . the damage had been done. Mistrust and disappointment pervaded the traditionally cordial relationship between the two allies."<sup>50</sup>

The Reagan administration did much to rebuild the trust in the relationship, promising to stop the withdrawals and looking for other ways to improve the relationship. A major change in America's foreign policy was the affirmation of the Soviet threat to East Asia, something the Carter administration took some time to realize. The 1980s were a time of massive buildup of the United States military, and a strengthening of commitments worldwide. But even successive Republican

administrations could not maintain the commitment to Korea.

In President Bush's first speech given on foreign soil, he spoke to the South Korean General Assembly, reaffirming America's support for South Korea's defense. He further pledged in 1989 to keep the forces in Korea indefinitely:

As President, I am committed to maintaining American forces in Korea, and I am committed to support our mutual defense treaty . . . There are no plans to reduce U.S. forces in Korea . . . their presence contributes to the peace and stability of Northeast Asia. They will remain in the Republic of Korea as long as they are needed and as long as we believe it is in the interest of peace to keep them there.<sup>51</sup>

However, the only constant in world affairs is change, and the end of the cold war and collapse of the Soviet Union brought new calls for a reduction of military forces worldwide. Northeast Asia was no exception. As Senator Alan Dixon, a member of the Committee on Armed Services, said in April, 1990,

. . . I firmly believe that the dramatic changes we are witnessing in the Soviet Union mean that the United States can and should reduce forces in East Asia--not just forces designed to defend against Eastern Europe. The bottom line is that the need for U.S. containment policies around the globe is no longer as urgent . . . I'm certainly not alone in arguing that U.S. troop reductions in East Asia are long overdue.<sup>52</sup>

The Bush administration produced a report for Senator Dixon's committee, which in effect was a road map for the

future role and structure of American forces in East Asia. This report called the future role one of "regional balancer, honest broker, and ultimate security guarantor."<sup>53</sup> The recommendation of the report for Korea was to change the role of U.S. forces from the lead to a supporting force, and to make some force reductions.

The specific reductions called for in the report were to be phased over ten years. The first phase would see the removal of 5,000 ground forces and 2,000 Air Force personnel in one to three years. The second and third phases did not specify numbers, but called for the increasing responsibility of South Korea's military for leading its own defense policy.<sup>54</sup>

On Jan 30, 1990, the South Korean Defense Ministry announced that the U.S. would withdraw 2,000 non-combat personnel from the peninsula by July, 1992, and close three of the five U.S. air bases there. South Korean authorities said the reduction would not affect the country's combat readiness. However, the Koreans always feared that once started, the United States policy would begin tumbling down a slippery slope and the reductions would not be moderated. The old security concerns in Korea again were resurrected, as well as the disappointment with the unreliability of U.S. foreign policy. A leading Korean publication reported the

following:

The pullout, which will be implemented between October this year and July, 1992, apparently heralds the start of an inevitable phase-out of U.S. military presence from Korea as a result of the new detente between East and West. This did not come as a complete surprise. Few people took President George Bush at his word when he reaffirmed during a visit to Seoul last year that U.S. troops 'will remain in the Republic of Korea as long as they are needed, and as long as we believe it is in the interest of peace to keep them here.' Nobody doubts the that the reduction announced Monday is the first phase of an overall reduction and will be followed by a cutback of ground forces whether it is 'symbolic' or 'substantive.' . . . the reduction will calm demands for a withdrawal of U.S. forces by Korea's radical students and progressives, though it could cause concern among older Koreans.<sup>55</sup>

The failure of the Bush administration to uphold the promise of a continued military presence in Korea was a very disheartening blow to Korea's confidence. They had expected to remain secure in the military relationship, but the history of the relationship explained their place in Washington's plans all too clearly.

Adding to the problems caused by the United States' fluctuating policies on personnel commitments to the ROK was the strain caused by the existence of the United Nations Command. This command structure placed all American and South Korean forces under the operational control of an American general. The ROK troops and commanders have accepted this arrangement since the Korean War. The hazard this arrangement poses was

revealed during the Kwangju Uprising in May, 1980. The South Korean military intervened in a massive protest in Kwangju and many civilians were killed. In the aftermath, the United States claimed it "played no significant role," but many Koreans believe the Americans were "at least indirectly involved."<sup>56</sup> The issues involving the United States were the use of Combined Forces Command troops, under control of the American commander, in two instances: December, 1979, Chun Doo Hwan seized the Defense Ministry and Army Headquarters, and in May, 1980, Chun quelled the uprising in Kwangju. The impression of many observers was that the Americans "allowed" the use of these forces, which gave strength to a growing anti-American sentiment in Korea.<sup>57</sup>

While the debate continues to the present time, the real problem is that of the command structure in Korea. The Combined Forces Command gives the Americans operational control, yet there are many situations where the United States' military leaders "bear responsibility but do not have real control."<sup>58</sup> In recent years, efforts have been made to correct the situation. As the United Nations (UN) forces have been pared down over the years, the South Korean military has been much improved. As South Korea modernizes its military and its entire society, attention must be given to the impact of this

military relationship.

Linda Lewis, an anthropologist who was present during the Kwangju Uprising, maintained that the Koreans there expected U.S. support but became upset and disillusioned when it never appeared. This led to the conclusion of political scientist Chong-sik Lee, that when the Americans have not performed their "expected" role, the South Koreans have felt "betrayed."<sup>59</sup> He believed it was due to a "cultural gap" between East and West, and said:

To the Westerners, international relations are simply a means of pursuing self-interest. But to East Asians, international relations are an extension of the "five relationships" that Confucius expounded. It is true that Asians are now becoming more and more "Westernized," or realistic. But the change has been slow. Western powers should pay more attention to this aspect of Asian international relations.<sup>60</sup>

By maintaining the command structure which is present in Korea, the United States ignores the efforts of the ROK to break out of the clientalist position that was necessary in the 1950s. The lessons of Kwangju point to the need to reassess this unequal relationship. As long as the "cultural gap" exists, this situation and the other problems in the military partnership will not subside. Further, the existence of these problems is a threat to East Asian security and stability and as long as they continue uncorrected, the United States will be



labelled "Orientalist" in its most negative context.

Through the years since the end of World War II, the United States has failed to provide a firm commitment to South Korea. Initially, there was a deliberate hands-off policy which some argue led to the Korean War, and massive U.S. involvement. Since then, there has always been a strong military presence in Korea. However, every few years, the United States has sent contradicting signals to the people of Korea. As they participated in the Vietnam War, the United States reassured them; then President Nixon applied his new doctrine and withdrew half of the American ground forces present in Korea. After Ford assumed the Presidency, the Koreans were again promised that the U.S. would stay. Then President Carter tried to implement a complete withdrawal, ostensibly as a further application of Nixon's Guam doctrine. When enough pressure was applied and force balance assessments reported, Carter was limited to the removal of one brigade of troops. Then President Reagan was elected and promised to leave the troops in Korea. When his tenure was over, President Bush promised to continue with a force commitment to Korea. However, the end of the cold war caused pressure to redeploy forces from around the world to the United States. Korea was included in the plans for this reduction, and in fact some 2,000 Air

Force members were withdrawn. However, as North Korea began threatening development of a nuclear weapons program, the phased withdrawal plan was held in abeyance.

This continually changing policy towards South Korea has been a destabilizing factor in that the trust of an ally can never be completely placed in the United States, given the history outlined above. The European countries received the opposite treatment - a firm commitment which materialized as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The United States never treated any of the NATO countries to such back and forth policies. Perhaps it is due to the bi-lateral nature of the treaties between the United States and East Asia. Perhaps the United States has always been trying to disengage from South Korea and has never been able to find the right time or method. In sharp contrast to Korea, Japan received far better treatment and commitment from the United States. As the following discussion will show, debate over military policy never included a serious withdrawal from the islands. The American military presence was assured, as was the promise of Japan's security.

The United States entered Japan as an occupation force to rebuild the country after its loss in World War

II. There are many works studying this occupation period, and so it will not be discussed here. What is important for the purposes of this paper, however, is the significance of the commitment as represented by the occupation force. The role of the United States in Japan was twofold:

(a) To insure that Japan would not again become a menace to the United States or to the peace and security of the world, and

(b) To bring about the eventual establishment of a peaceful and responsible government which would respect the rights of other states and would support the objectives of the United States as reflected in the ideals and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.<sup>61</sup>

The disarming of Japan was seen as desirable for all nations involved, and this led to the United States agreeing to defend Japan. However, the Japanese realized that by agreeing to Article IX in their constitution, they were making themselves vulnerable in the future. If they ever became a developed nation again, their neighbors might not be able to resist the temptation of an invasion.

Initially, the United States had followed Truman's strategy of withdrawing from Asia. In regard to Japan, this was evidenced in a National Security Council Memorandum dated June 2, 1948. It stated:

. . . every effort, consistent with military security and the proper performance of the

occupational mission as envisaged in this policy paper, should be made to reduce to a minimum (U.S. tactical forces), their cost to the Japanese economy, and the psychological impact of their presence on the Japanese population.<sup>62</sup>

To counter this move, Foreign Minister Hitoshi Ashida and Chief Secretary of the Cabinet Suehiro Nishio, delivered a letter to the United States 8th Army Commander in Japan in 1948. In part it said that the best method for Japan to safeguard her independence was to make an agreement with the United States to defend Japan against a third nation's aggression. This was the embryo of the Yoshida Doctrine, and the price Japan had to pay for this agreement was to allow the United States forces to station themselves on the islands.<sup>63</sup> Thus, while the occupation was formed to rebuild an independent Japan, the United States received a strategic base and a supportive ally.

While the United States occupation had been working to disarm and pacify Japan, changes in the international environment altered the policy. The Americans became aware of the animosity of the Soviet Union and the potential threat Communism there and in China posed to the West. The State Department faced the dilemma of asking Japan to rearm and later facing a resurgent militarism from the islands. The National Security Council offered this assessment:

We may eventually find it necessary, through force of circumstances, to adopt the objective of a strongly nationalist, anti-Soviet Japan which we would regard without favor but as decidedly preferable to a Japan oriented toward the U.S.S.R.<sup>64</sup>

This statement revealed that the security of Japan (and indirectly South Korea) was guaranteed as a hedge against Soviet expansion. The United States did not perceive the importance of protecting a nation for its own merits, or befriending a weaker nation for its own worth. While, as in the case of South Korea, the motivations were not important at the time, they have become so with the passage of years and the advance of the Japanese.

Thus the occupation leaders instituted the "reverse course" on Japan and asked them to rebuild a military force. The police force which was in place was expanded and later became the Self Defense Forces. After these issues were decided, Secretary of State Dean Acheson created his now infamous defense perimeter in January 1950. Excluding Taiwan and Korea, he declared:

that there is no intention of any sort of abandoning or weakening the defenses of Japan and that whatever arrangements are to be made either through permanent settlement or otherwise, that defense must and shall be maintained.<sup>65</sup>

While the defense of Japan was assured, South Korea was placed beyond the sphere of United States' concern. Thus evolved one of the perceived causes of the Korean War.

At the San Francisco peace conference of September, 1951, the agreement was formally reached to allow United States forces to be based in Japan in return for the promise of defending Japan against external threats. The State department wanted an "immediate, non punitive" peace treaty, and the Defense Department demanded "assurances that U.S. troops would remain in Japan."<sup>66</sup> Thus, Article 1 of the treaty stated:

Japan grants, and the United States of America accepts, the right . . . to dispose United States land, air, and sea forces in and about Japan. Such forces may be utilized to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East and to the security of Japan against armed attack from without, including assistance given at the express request of the Japanese government to put down large-scale internal riots and disturbances in Japan, caused through instigation or intervention by an outside power or powers.<sup>67</sup>

Of important note, the treaty between the United States and Japan differed greatly from the NATO agreements in that the NATO members "were bound by the principle of reciprocal obligations," but the U.S.-Japan agreement "stipulated Japan's unilateral and unconditional dependency upon U.S. military protection."<sup>68</sup> This alliance and security system was designed to counter the threat posed by the Communist forces in the Soviet Union and China, and would form the basis for East Asian superpower politics throughout the cold war.

The United States was planning to use the bases in Japan as a forward presence to stop the spread of communism and to maintain stability in the region. The foreign policy makers in Washington had decided that Japan was vital to the security of the Pacific and East Asia, and so in turn it was important to the security of the United States. Given the state of affairs in Japan after the war, and its reputation as a belligerent in Asia, the natural course of action was that which was taken by the United State. The policy makers and strategists in Washington came to the conclusion that Japan was vital to the security of the United States. Thus, the presence of U.S. forces in Japan, while not without problems, was never beset with the uncertainty of Korea.

There have been problems in the relationship, but they have had more to do with economic rather than military policies. Where these two overlapped was in the relatively recent issue of burdensharing. Many in the United States recognized that Japan had become a leading economic nation in the 1980s and expected Japan to do more and pay more for its defense.

The argument is well known among those who have studied modern Japanese history or politics, and so it will not be discussed in depth here. What will be

offered is a Japanese perspective on the 1% GNP issue-- the Japanese policy of limiting defense spending to 1% of the GNP in each national budget--and rebuilding the Japanese military.

The United States has been calling on Japan to increase its defense spending and to remove the 1% GNP cap. The comparison is made that the United States has spent between 5% - 8% GNP on defense over the last 30 years. The Japanese respond that there are other ways to measure defense spending, and that they share the burden in other ways. Their diplomacy and foreign aid programs are designed to keep neighbors friendly and prevent the creation of enemies. Thus, the need for a strong military is diminished. According to Kazayuki Hamada, Associate Director, Japan Program, of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, in his report before a U.S. House subcommittee, "For Japan, economic aid is the prime method of winning friends overseas and securing its future."<sup>69</sup>

Japan has indeed assisted United States allies, and in 1988 became the world's leading donor of foreign aid. Hamada argued that Japan was the leading donor to China, Brazil, the Philippines, and Saudi Arabia. He correctly pointed out that these nations were all important to the security of the United States, and this should be



considered during debate on the burdensharing issue. Further, in defending Japan's spending practices, Hamada pointed out that Japan provides 40% of the \$6 billion (1989) cost for maintaining U.S. military personnel in Japan.<sup>70</sup> With the presence of the United States to deter any real threats, the Japanese have found different ways to assist, within the framework of their self-imposed domestic constraints. Thus, during discussions on the issue, it is the Japanese opinion that "a superficial comparison of the ratio of defense expenditures to GNP will not lead to a constructive dialogue."<sup>71</sup> Perhaps the strongest argument against increasing Japan's defense spending is that, due to domestic and international pressure, they can't:

. . . the present upward trend in spending is almost reaching the maximum possible level capable of sustaining popular support. Growing concern for Japan's becoming a military giant, after breaking the 1% GNP barrier, is observed not only in Japan, but in neighboring Asia, as well as in the U.S.<sup>72</sup>

The other reason the United States forces are necessary in Japan is to appease the concerns of the neighboring Asian countries. The Japanese realize that their pre-war actions are still remembered and lead to tension in the region. Hamada addressed this issue in a very frank manner when he admitted:

. . . due to the very tragic history of Japan's overseas invasion . . . there is a strong

concern in Korea, in China, Philippines and other Asian countries, about the Japanese's real intention.<sup>73</sup>

And further, "In the Pacific region, people are still afraid of Japan. Allies say, oh, no, we don't want Japan to get strong militarily."<sup>74</sup> These concerns are expressed by countries that are otherwise on friendly relations with Japan, and thus welcome the presence of the Americans in Japan as a stabilizing force. The Japanese realize these feelings exist, and skillfully use them as a constraint to keep from increasing their defense spending, whether or not the concerns are, in reality, justified.

Another controversy related to the presence of American forces in Japan surfaced during the Okinawa reversion process. The United States occupied Okinawa during WWII and built up many bases there in the post-war years. As Yoshida agreed "to provide Japanese facilities and services in support of any U.N. military action in the Far East,"<sup>75</sup> they also allowed the United States to control the Ryukyus "as long as conditions of threat and tension exist in the Far East, but Japan's residual sovereignty over them was acknowledged."<sup>76</sup> Thus, since the end of the war, the United States has had a large military contingent on the island. Okinawa essentially became a large forward base for the United States forces.

The personnel there were to deploy to Korea or other Asian areas in the event of conflict. During the reversion planning in 1970, Under Secretary of State U. Alexis Johnson asserted that the bases there were not as important to "the defense of Japan and Okinawa as they [were] to our ability to support our commitments elsewhere . . . in Korea and Taiwan."<sup>77</sup> Further, the Air Force assets were "subject to deployment to the Indian Ocean region under certain circumstances."<sup>78</sup> This issue was very contentious in Japan, especially in regard to a war in Korea. A 1976 survey by the Shin Joho Center of Tokyo found a "clearly negative consensus" on the use of the American forces in Japan to defend South Korea. The public opinion was divided at 62% opposed to and 17% approving of the use of the bases in Okinawa. (The numbers for mainland Japan bases were comparable, within 2%.)<sup>79</sup> That the United States would continue to expect the use of these bases against other nations reflected a lack of concern for Japanese feelings. Rather than discuss and resolve the issue, the Americans chose to ignore it and assume the bases will be available. Such attitudes revealed America's arrogance toward their allies.

Because of these considerations, the reversion process was a sensitive issue, but in the period of the

Vietnam War, it became vital to good relations. One scholar concluded that "at the Sato-Johnson summit in 1967 at the height of the war, a bargain was apparently struck linking Japanese support for the war with the return of these islands."<sup>80</sup>

There was some tension from the leftist elements regarding the American presence, especially during the turbulent Vietnam era. Several groups, such as the Okinawan Christian Peacemakers Council and the Peace in Vietnam Committee, sent a document called the Okinawan Peace Mandate to the U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This document called for the "total and immediate end to all military bases, personnel, and weapons on Okinawa." It further requested that the "so-called Japanese Self-Defense Forces not set foot on Okinawa."<sup>81</sup>

In studying the issue in hindsight, some analysts believe that the reversion defused tensions among radicals in Japan protesting Vietnam.<sup>82</sup> The concern these protestors raised was very great because Nakasone Yasuhiro, the Defense Agency Director, was calling for the revision of the security treaty. The socialists and other leftist politicians were mounting attacks on the treaty, and the student radicals were becoming violent; there were hundreds of arrests on campuses and near

military bases. In the end, the Japanese government renewed the security treaty without revision.<sup>83</sup> It was in this light that the United States agreed to relinquish control of Okinawa. Since then, a measure of dislike of the American presence remains, but there has been no real discussion at the national government level calling for the removal of the American forces.

The United States is placed in an unstable situation, committed to defend several allies, but having only bilateral treaties and agreements with them. The lack of a collective security agreement has caused reactive, incongruous, and unequal foreign policy by the United States for Northeast Asia.

This chapter first traced the American military presence in Korea since the end of the second World War. The impression this overview provides is one of repeated attempts at disengagement and the use of Korea's security by American politicians as a bargaining chip to alleviate United States domestic political pressure. Nixon used a partial withdrawal to legitimize his Guam doctrine; Carter tried to use a withdrawal to win domestic support for his administration; Bush planned a partial withdrawal as a way to give America a "peace dividend" for winning the Cold War. In between these events, the Koreans were

repeatedly promised that the Americans would stay until it was certain that the ROK could defend itself. The message this contradictory policy sends to the Koreans is that America is trying to find a way to accomplish the initial plan of the late 1940s: leave Korea to handle itself. Yet the command structure will not allow Korea to break free and has led to significant tension in the partnership. This message is starkly contrasted by the discussion about Japan.

In discussing the American military in Japan, the issue of disengagement never surfaced. It was not until the 1980s, when Japan's economy soared, that the call for more equal burdensharing caused some tension in the security relationship. There is some tension on Okinawa caused by the presence of the American military, but there has never been an attempt by the United States to withdraw its forces. For the Americans, the bases in Japan are strategically very beneficial and worth the cost. For the Japanese, the American presence has been a strong deterrent to outside aggression. For other Asian nations, the United States served to keep Japan reined in militarily.

Thus, there appears to be two distinct policies for Northeast Asia, one for Korea and one for Japan, and they reflect the lack of a coherent foreign-military policy on

the part of the United States. For Korea, this may result from the fact that the United States has, until recently, not tried to comprehend Korea in its historical context. As distinguished Japanese scholar Fuji Kamiya said,

. . . it is worth noting that the United States, which is deeply involved in Korea, has sometimes failed to grasp the basic facts concerning that country.<sup>84</sup>

In contrast, Admiral Huntington Hardisty, Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command, had this to say about the relationship with Japan:

The U.S. security relationship with Japan is the linchpin of our Pacific strategy. The Japanese are well on their way toward a self-defense force capable of meeting their commitment to defend the sea lanes out to 1,000 miles . . . However, even after achieving their self-defense goals the Japanese will be outnumbered in their own back yard by more powerful elements of the Soviet far east military forces. They will need the continued help of U.S. forward deployed forces to achieve the mutual security objectives of both countries and the region.<sup>85</sup>

The admiral's comments reflect a strong commitment to Japan, and the relations through the years bear him out. As Korea and Japan are two distinct nations and cultures in Northeast Asia, the United States has never recognized the need for a collective agreement, or has been unsure of the prospects for success in creating one. The lessons of 1948-1950 should be considered now, as North Korea comes closer to the brink of economic collapse. A

firm resolve from the United States to stand by both Japan and Korea is necessary to improve stability in Northeast Asia.

The manner in which the United States has acted toward East Asia, as outlined in this chapter, reinforces Said's and others' concerns about America's attitudes toward East Asia. As the protector, the Americans developed an air of superiority that affected the military policies and actions. Decisions were made without apparent consideration for their impact upon the nations involved. The effect of this situation is that Asians feel the United States has little respect for their sovereignty. As a Carnegie Endowment Study Group recently concluded, Asians are still in a "post-colonial era" and are suspicious of Western attempts at reasserting such influence in the region.<sup>86</sup> This chapter depicted political and diplomatic dimensions of the perceptions presented in the first chapter.

The following chapter will focus on another aspect of the military relationship, that of nuclear weapons. While the policy of the United States has been more consistent relative to the matter presented above, there are some considerations which make it similar in perspective to that outlined in this chapter.



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### CHAPTER III

#### NUCLEAR WEAPONS IN NORTHEAST ASIA

The United States was the first nation to develop and then deploy a nuclear weapon. Since the end of World War II, many nations, both superpowers and not, have developed nuclear weapons. While this led to great fear during the height of the Cold War, nuclear weapons played an important role in international relations. The world polarized into East and West, with the "haves" protecting the "have nots" in various locations throughout the world. As the cold war wound to a close, nuclear weapons still posed a great concern for international policy makers. The threat that a small nation or terrorist group could own a nuclear weapon is very real, and destabilizing to world order. Such situations require sensitivity and are extremely risky.

To better understand the complexities of these situations, an examination of the history of nuclear

weapons in Northeast Asia, and the domestic and international concerns they raised, provides valuable insight into the multifaceted dilemma decision makers face. Understanding the manner in which decisions regarding nuclear weapons were reached allows one to study a particular aspect of the relationship between the nations involved. When studied with the ideas of the first chapter in mind, the actions of the United States, the protector, may take on a new significance.

South Korea accepted the presence of United States tactical nuclear weapons in their country as a deterrent to North Korean aggression. Japan, after its defeat in WW II, wanted no part of them. As North Korea's Communist-bloc support weakened in the late 1980s, it began development of its own nuclear weapons program. In response, both South Korea and Japan are feeling the need to reassess their current non-nuclear positions. How has the United States presence and policy contributed to stability in the region? Do United States troops in South Korea aid the nuclear deterrent capability or hinder it? This chapter will answer some of those questions and illuminate some of the problems that have arisen in the past decades.

Some of the problems of concern here are that American nuclear weapons were in South Korea for many



years yet South Korea was discouraged from starting their own program. These weapons were used as a counterweight to North Korean conventional military superiority. Now North Korea is presumed to have nuclear weapons, which poses a grave threat to South Korea and Japan. Japan has remained non-nuclear and at the time of the Okinawa reversion process they reaffirmed their position. More recently, however, the nuclear weapons issue is being debated in Japan, and the opposition is weakening. The presence of United States nuclear weaponry in Northeast Asia during the Cold War was a threat to North Korea but was not an adequate safeguard of stability in the region. In more recent times South Korea and Japan have become uncomfortable with the United States' resolve to wage war on their behalf, echoing concerns raised in the post-Vietnam period.

Nuclear weapons have been a concern for Koreans ever since they witnessed the devastation caused to their neighbor, Japan, at the end of World War II. While Korea did not feel immediately threatened, the course the nation was to take would forever be clouded by the burgeoning superpowers' vast array of nuclear weapons in Asia, and the cold war in which the two Koreas were pawns. With the outbreak of the Korean War, the fear of

a nuclear device being used on the peninsula became very real. Fortunately for Korea, the weapons were not used, and the fighting ended with the 1953 armistice agreement.

Since then, South Koreans have accepted the presence of American tactical nuclear weapons on their land. They also accepted assurances that they would be protected by the United States' nuclear umbrella. The history of nuclear weapons provides an interesting insight into U.S.-ROK relations. During the American-supported regimes of Syngman Rhee and Park Chung Hee, South Korea was able to flourish. Many say this was due to a relationship of clientalism or flunkyism. The Koreans even have their own term, SADAE CHUUI (serving the great), for the relationship, which was coined and accepted during the centuries of its status as a tribute state to China.<sup>1</sup> A similar relationship also developed in the nuclear arena, with the Koreans respecting the wishes of their great protector. The United States, for its part, was not protecting South Korea solely out of international altruism. The United States' goals are best summarized by James A. Kelly, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, who in 1985 said:

Maintaining peace and stability in Northeast Asia - where the interests of the U.S., Japan, China, and the (former) Soviet Union intersect - is a vital concern of the United States. Renewed conflict on the Korean peninsula would put at risk the stability of

the region and the political relationships of the major powers there.<sup>2</sup>

In the interest of promoting stability in Northeast Asia, the United States saw fit to use the nuclear umbrella and tactical nuclear weapons to deter another attack on South Korea. Dr. Jeremy J. Stone, President of the Federation of American Scientists, told the United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs that President Eisenhower threatened the North Koreans with nuclear weapons to force the Armistice Agreement in 1953. While this view is contested by some scholars, Dr. Stone said the United States threatened North Korea "periodically with nuclear weapons whenever the United States found it suitable to maintain our deterrence posture against . . . invasion of the South."<sup>3</sup> Consequently, according to Korean scholar Nam Joo-hong, the United States unofficially announced in 1958 that the United Nations Command in South Korea reserved the 'right' to equip its forces with atomic artillery . . . to compensate for the substantial reduction of UN forces." Nam claims the United States began to locate tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea from that time on. Nam also notes that in 1975 Secretary of Defense James Schlesinger declared that the United States deployed nuclear weapons in South Korea and was prepared to use them.<sup>4</sup> This was the first official

announcement of nuclear weapons being deployed on South Korea soil. That the weapons were there since the late 1950s was something of an open secret.

In spite of the fact that South Korea was protected by the United States' strategic nuclear umbrella, and North Korea was effectively deterred by the tactical nuclear weapons on the peninsula, South Korea made an effort in the 1970s to begin development of their own nuclear weapons program. This effort was calculated to compensate for several international developments, the most important of which were the withdrawal of 20,000 U.S. troops in 1971 and the murky conclusion of the Vietnam conflict.

The United States determined that under the Nixon Doctrine it was safe to remove 20,000 of its 62,000 troops stationed in Korea, as the South Korean forces had grown and become better trained in the two decades since the war. Also, the United States pledged \$1.5 billion in military assistance for a force modernization program.<sup>5</sup> The United States continuously reaffirmed its commitment to defending South Korea, but was nonetheless contemplating the withdrawal of the rest of its troops.

In 1973, Secretary of State William Rogers said the troops "would remain until it was clear that their removal would not destabilize the balance of military

power between the two Koreas."<sup>6</sup> Senator Jesse Helms also attested to the belief that the United States was turning away from Asia following the "agony of Vietnam,"<sup>7</sup> and as discussed in the previous chapter, one of President Carter's campaign issues was to withdraw the remaining troops from Korea. Because of this overt sentiment, the South Koreans felt their security was becoming more vulnerable as time went on. Added to this feeling of being left alone was the fear caused by the massive military build-up of North Korea throughout the 1970s. This gave the North an overwhelming advantage on the peninsula,<sup>8</sup> a force which former United States Forces Korea Commander General Robert Sennewald in 1983 called "A formidable force - modern, mechanized, offensively postured, and hostile."<sup>9</sup>

The South Koreans expressed their concern and their feelings about their own rights to self protection in the face of this vulnerability:

Shortly after the fall of South Vietnam, in June 1975, President Park said in an interview with the *Washington Post* that South Korea 'would do anything necessary to ensure its survival, including development of nuclear weapons . . . if the U.S. nuclear umbrella is withdrawn.'<sup>10</sup>

Two years later, Korean Foreign Minister Park Dong-jin responded to President Carter's planned withdrawal by saying:

We have signed the nuclear nonproliferation treaty and thus our basic position is that we do not intend to develop nuclear weapons by ourselves. But if it is necessary for national security interests and people's safety, it is possible for Korea as a sovereign state to make its own judgement on the matter.<sup>11</sup>

The Korean scholar Baek Kwang-il concludes that South Korea had the capability and technical skills to produce nuclear weapons in the late 1970s, lacking only a reprocessing facility to create plutonium. The *New York Times* reported in 1975 that the South Koreans attempted in 1975 to obtain a reprocessing plant from France. (The only purpose for such a facility is the production of weapons-grade plutonium. While the plutonium may be used for fuel, it is not used in the production of nuclear energy.) The deal was canceled under pressure from the United States.<sup>12</sup> With the United States' military build-up by the Reagan administration and renewed assurances of commitment to South Korea's defense, the matter of South Korea's nuclear weapons development was laid to rest.

The next major development in Korea came in September 1991 when President Bush announced the unilateral end to deploying all ground- and sea-launched tactical nuclear weapons. While this was a global strategy designed to ease tensions with the Soviet Union and promote Gorbachev's reform movement, it had the added side effect of removing most of the United States'

nuclear weapons from South Korea.<sup>13</sup> As North Korea was developing nuclear power plants in the 1980s and suspicions were growing about a weapons program there, the United States offered an additional concession to remove air-launched nuclear weapons from the Korean peninsula as well.<sup>14</sup> Later, in November 1991, South Korean President Roh Tae Woo declared his country a nuclear-free zone when he said South Korea "would not manufacture, possess, store, deploy, or use nuclear weapons and in addition, that the South would not engage in plutonium extraction or enrichment activities that might give rise to weapons-grade materials in the South."<sup>15</sup>

The matter of North Korea's development of nuclear weapons in the recent past and present times is too complex and dynamic to be addressed in depth in this paper. The history of nuclear weapons in North Korea is an issue that is still developing. In the past, North Korea relied upon China and the former Soviet Union for deterrence of the western nations. As that well of support dries up in the 1990s, North Korea's military posture becomes an matter of grave concern for the South Koreans. It is possible that the next introduction of nuclear weapons on the Korean peninsula will be by North Korea.

In hindsight, the Americans have placed South Korea at risk. Under pressure from the United States, the Koreans stopped working on their own nuclear program. However, the U.S. has not been able to prevent North Korea from developing its own program. Thus, while Presidents Bush and Roh removed all nuclear weapons from the peninsula, they left South Korea exposed to a very real threat from Pyongyang.

Japan, like Korea, has been protected by the United States' nuclear umbrella since the second World War. Unlike Korea, however, Japan suffered the first and only nuclear weapon deliveries in world history. This has had a profound psychological impact on Japan and the way they view the United States and nuclear weapons. Perhaps only a Japanese person can understand the deep feelings such an attack on one's homeland and family would rouse. Many who study Japan speak of the "nuclear allergy"<sup>16</sup> that has gripped the Japanese people. Political Scientist Susan Pharr attributed it to public opposition to rearmament and the "restrictive nature" of the MacArthur Constitution's Article 9--the "Peace Clause", among other things.<sup>17</sup> The "allergy" was codified in the three non-nuclear principles declared by Prime Minister Sato Eisaku in 1967. American scholar Kenneth Pyle explained Sato's proclamation in this way:



. . . Sato enunciated the three nonnuclear principles, which helped to calm pacifist fears aroused by China's nuclear experiments and the escalation of the war in Vietnam. The three principles held that Japan would not produce, possess, or permit the introduction of nuclear weapons onto its soil. Lest the principles be regarded as unconditional, Sato clarified matters in a Diet speech the following year in which he described the four pillars of Japan's nuclear policy: 1) reliance on the U.S. nuclear umbrella, 2) the three nonnuclear principles, 3) promotion of worldwide disarmament, and 4) development of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In short, the U.S. nuclear umbrella was to be the *sine qua non* of the nonnuclear principles.<sup>18</sup>

These principles and pillars have guided Japan in the post-war era, and Japan has not expressly pushed for development of its own nuclear weapons program. However, protection by the United States has raised some troublesome issues for the Japanese.

The United States stationed tactical nuclear weapons on the island of Okinawa, as a forward base from which to use them against cold war enemies. This was not a violation of the non-nuclear principles, as Okinawa was under the United States' control following World War II. In 1972, however, when ownership of Okinawa reverted to Japan, the weapons had to be removed from the island. In fact, the debate over the nuclear weapons storage rights on Okinawa was one of the "pivotal, communique-related questions" in the reversion discussions.<sup>19</sup>

Since that time, the United States has not stationed

nuclear weapons in Japanese territory, but has unofficially violated the nuclear weapons-free zone of Japan since at least the early 1960s when United States Navy ships, still loaded with nuclear weapons, sailed through Japanese waters and into Japanese ports. Rather than cause friction in the U.S.-Japan security relationship, Japanese officials ignored the incidents.<sup>20</sup> These incidents nevertheless fueled the opposition to the United States, as such acts were an affront to Japanese sovereignty.

The nonnuclear stance, as a part of the overall military debate in Japan, has developed polarized schools of thought regarding Japan's role in its own security and military development, and nuclear weapons are a constant matter of discussion. The two opposing camps are the Progressives and the Nationalists. The Progressives argue that Japan should remain nuclear weapons-free and act as a model for other nations. They believe Japan's role in the world was to "demonstrate that a modern, industrial nation could exist without arming itself."<sup>21</sup> The Nationalists dismissed this view as "utopian and un-Japanese",<sup>22</sup> and distanced themselves from the mainstream by calling for the "restoration of Japan as a normal nation-state with its own independent military capacity and foreign policy."<sup>23</sup> One of the nationalist leaders,

Shimizu Ikutaro, summarized his beliefs in this way:

The nuclear powers, even though they do not use their weapons, are able to instill fears in those countries that do not have them. A country like Japan that does not possess nuclear weapons and is afraid of them will be easy game for the nuclear powers. Putting political pressure on Japan would be like twisting a baby's arm.<sup>24</sup>

Pyle endorsed Shimizu's argument, saying "Japan, in short, must exercise the nuclear option."<sup>25</sup> While this view may be considered one extreme on a continuum of political-military opinion, the researcher Umemoto Tetsuya found a growing "realism" view in Japan in 1980, which he said indicated a popular approval of maintenance of armament and alliance participation and a weakening of support for the Progressives. Umemoto also found that in the 1980s, domestic constraints on the defense establishment were weakening, but the Japanese people still firmly opposed changing "institutional constraints." Thus, Umemoto concluded the Japanese government would meet stiff opposition if it attempted to reorient the military to an offensive posture, acquire nuclear weapons, or abandon other traditional limits.<sup>26</sup>

Most scholars agree that Japan's military is in a defensive, nonnuclear posture. Although the nationalists propose rearming and developing a nuclear weapons program, the mainstream is still opposed. This did not prevent Japanese leaders from speculating on what might

trigger a change in Japanese official and popular opinion. In 1980, Japanese scholar Sakanaka Tomohisa proposed reasons why Japan might change its stance from Article 9 and the nonnuclear principles, why they might change from "nuclear antipathy to support":

- 1) If the (former) USSR gained a threatening lead in the arms race,
- 2) If South Korea or Taiwan developed nuclear capability,
- 3) If economic depression cut short raw material imports and America returned to isolation.<sup>27</sup>

While the first case is no longer relevant, the second and third, if adapted slightly, can be applied to the present-day environment. If one inserts North Korea in the second condition, or consider an extended recession in the third condition, then there are two strong points to consider for the 1990s.

Faced with new threats from the presumed North Korean nuclear program in recent years, threats posed by the Nodong Missile which has the range to reach Japan, and the suspicion of weapons development, high-level Japanese ministers said they may need to develop a deterrent nuclear capability. In July 1993, Japanese Foreign Minister Kabun Moto said Japan must have the will to build nuclear weapons to defend itself from a North Korean nuclear threat, but the minister also said Japan

supported the extension of the nuclear nonproliferation treaty.<sup>28</sup> Only a few weeks earlier, Japanese officials had refused to endorse the extension at a Group of 7 conference, saying Japan should reserve the right to develop nuclear weapons if North Korea should do so.<sup>29</sup>

If the current recession continues to be a financial hardship on Japan's economy, and the United States stiffens its current trade posture against Japan, the combined threats could push the mainstream opinion closer to that of the nationalists. Sakanaka, in his 1980 article, viewed the Japanese as poised to rise in defense of their interests when he concluded that "Japan has the technical capability to produce nuclear weapons at any time."<sup>30</sup> Japan is certainly closer to that reality than is South Korea, as Japan has the means to acquire weapons-grade plutonium. According to Dr. Paul Leventhal, President of the Nuclear Control Institute, Japan has plans to acquire 100 tons of plutonium within the next two decades. Japan received its reactor fuel from the United States, and then shipped the fuel to Britain and France, where reprocessing plants recovered the plutonium. In 1991, Japan had plans to build its own reprocessing facility which could recover 8 tons of plutonium each year (enough for over 1000 nuclear weapons annually).<sup>31</sup> The debate over this activity centers on

the fact that "plutonium and highly enriched uranium are not essential for nuclear power or research reactors, but are essential for making bombs. . . . [T]here is no need for these dangerous fuels because cheap, low enriched uranium that is unsuitable for weapons is in ample supply."<sup>32</sup>

The reality in Japan is that the nuclear allergy is weakening and opposition to nuclear weapons development is waning. While Japan has successfully caught up with the western nations economically, it did so while surrendering its security concerns to a foreign power. The commitment to the non-nuclear principles has held firm, as the United States honored them in the reversion of Okinawa. However, with the increased threats posed by its neighbor, and the perceived weakening of the U.S. commitment to (or ability to defend) Northeast Asian security, the Japanese are poised on the verge of nuclear weapons capability. If the mainstream population allows the nationalist element to proceed, the tools are already in place for Japan to quickly join the world of nuclear powers. It is safe to conclude that hard evidence of a North Korean nuclear device will be the deciding factor that sways public opinion sufficiently to remove the constraints on Japanese leaders.

The United States would likely oppose any

development by Japan due to the U.S. non-proliferation policy in international relations. However, to continue to insist that Japan remain non-nuclear is to keep them one step below America. As a superpower, the United States has a unique role in world politics; yet it can not ignore the emergence of Japan into world leadership. It is becoming difficult for the Japanese, and the Koreans, to continue to obey the wishes of the United States. For America to continue to expect unquestioning obedience is to ignore the advances the Asian allies have made in all aspects of societal development.

While this chapter focused on the matter of nuclear weapons in Korea and Japan, it is also important to briefly reconsider another "weapon" in South Korea, the U.S. soldier. The policy of providing front line assistance to South Korea was sound in 1953, and remained sound for many years, when North Korea posed a serious invasion threat. However, many South Koreans believe their forces are able to act alone to counter a North Korean invasion; what then is the purpose of the American soldier at the front line?

The North Koreans have been developing a nuclear energy program for several years. Senator Alan Cranston, Chairman of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, suspected

the North Koreans of developing a nuclear weapons program as early as the mid-1980s. Senator Cranston said that for "seven long years, President Reagan and President Bush pursued a policy of quiet diplomacy in an effort to deter the North Korean program." The senator placed little faith in that diplomacy, saying

. . . what is undeniably true is that, so far, the administration's policy, intended to halt the North Korean nuclear program, has been a failure . . . There is no greater threat to world security than a rogue nation like North Korea obtaining a nuclear weapon."<sup>33</sup>

More specifically, Selig Harrison, Senior Associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, explained the problem in United States policy toward North Korea:

They (North Korea) know that we had nuclear capability at two levels, the ones in Korea and the ones outside of Korea . . . Pyongyang has repeatedly called for the removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from the peninsula, but also for lifting the U.S. nuclear umbrella as part of a multilateral agreement . . . the United States is now saying to the North in effect, 'you give up your nuclear option but we'll keep ours, in order to make our security commitment to the South credible.'<sup>34</sup>

Harrison was supported in his view by political writer Andrew Mack, who said,

Following the Bush initiative of September 1991 that announced the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons worldwide, Washington made it clear to Seoul that South Korea was still protected by the United States' nuclear umbrella. To Pyongyang, this could only mean that the United States was still prepared to use nuclear weapons against it.<sup>35</sup>



Political Scientist and current ROK Foreign Minister Han Sung-joo provided a view contrary to Harrison's when he said:

Protection by nuclear umbrella is an important part of the security assistance to be provided to non-nuclear nations within the framework of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. It is a protection endorsed by the United Nations Security Council. In its absence, in fact, enforcement of nuclear non-proliferation can become even more difficult. South Korean renunciation of the nuclear umbrella is a demand that does not merit consideration. It merely heightens the suspicion that Pyongyang wants to make South Korea vulnerable to nuclear blackmail or to an actual attack.<sup>36</sup>

What Han and Harrison were arguing is whether the United States can get out of a dilemma that was caused by United States policy in the first place. Han's goal was the protection of South Korea at all costs, as that is where his personal concerns lie. Harrison, on the other hand, was looking at things in the global context, arguing that the United States can not afford to aggravate North Korea any longer, and can make a large concession regarding the nuclear umbrella. After all, there are always United States nuclear weapons in the Pacific theater somewhere that could be used against North Korea. What Harrison's proposition does is remove the first strike capability from the United States - deterrence would then be based on the threat of a retaliatory strike.

The folly of second strike deterrence is that it is

not a stable situation. As Congressman Ronald V. Dellums told a United States House Subcommittee about his concerns for NATO force structure:

. . . No military analyst claims the U.S. troops stationed (in Europe) would repel any large scale Soviet conventional attack. I would like to quote General Lemnitzer (Commander of SHAPE), who said before the committee in 1970, 'One of the greatest problems that would confront NATO today would be a large conventional attack. Then we would be faced with decision to use nuclear weapons or be defeated.' This is an astonishing admission.<sup>37</sup>

The situation that NATO forces confronted was the same for United Nations forces on the Korean peninsula. North Korea had a large lead in conventional forces through the 1970s, and the main deterrent was the nuclear weapons poised to attack them. These weapons have been removed from the peninsula, and President Carter and President Bush both reduced troop strength in South Korea. Neither cut was as drastic as initially planned, and there are still some 40,000 U.S. troops stationed there.

The question which remains is whether North Korea would have the upper hand in a large scale conventional invasion, given that the nuclear umbrella is no longer held directly over the peninsula: would the counterattack require first-use of nuclear weapons to effectively retaliate? Both the United States and Japan fear a new Korean conflict because of the probability of

escalation.<sup>38</sup> Would the American people support such an act? A more important question is whether South Korea and Japan have faith in the United States to effectively deter North Korea, because the assurances of the nuclear umbrella are tenuous at best. The answer to both questions is no. That is why there is increased call in Japan for a stronger military; that is why the South Koreans attempted to develop their own nuclear program in the 1970s; that is why Japan has gathered the resources necessary to create nuclear weapons literally on a moment's notice; that is why the United States leaves a token number of troops in the way of the North Koreans.

In order for the United States to muster popular support for a military operation in a far off land, an operation that would likely escalate to tactical nuclear warfare, something personally threatening to America has to happen. The U.S. troop on the DMZ claims to have a "DIP" mission - Die in Place. This would serve as an effective tripwire for bringing the United States into the conflict at the outset, and justify extreme action on the part of the United Nations forces in Korea.<sup>39</sup> While this view is not extremely popular in the United States, it appears to be a reality for Korea.

The idea of using nuclear deterrence against a conventionally armed adversary was first promulgated by

the Nixon Doctrine in the early 1970s. This doctrine was designed to allow for the removal of United States personnel from the Pacific theater, while remaining committed to the defense of Japan and other allies. Edward Olsen, writing for the World Affairs Council of Northern California, believes this to be inherently destabilizing in Northeast Asia: as the United States forces are removed, South Korean forces must become stronger to fill the void. As South Korea becomes stronger, the old adversarial relationship between them and Japan might be revived. This in turn could lead to Japan's rearmament and greater instability in the region.<sup>40</sup>

An opposing view is taken by Nam Joo-hong. He believes the tactical nuclear weapons in Korea and the nuclear umbrella were put in place to deter China and/or the former Soviet Union from intervening in a renewed conflict. He contends "South Korea never wished the United States to destroy their own people in the North."<sup>41</sup> Indeed, the target policy of the United States was ambiguous until the mid-1970s when Secretary Schlesinger said the weapons may be targeted against North Korea.<sup>42</sup> In spite of these uncertainties, Nam believed the umbrella would serve its purpose by keeping a conventional conflict from escalating, mainly due to

balance that existed between the superpowers,<sup>43</sup> and thus the presence of nuclear weapons was inherently stabilizing for Northeast Asia.

While Olsen and Nam disagree, they both have arguments that can apply to the present situation. Nam, however, dismissed the hostile posture of North Korea's conventional forces, the strong advantage North Korea held throughout the 1970s, and the uncertainty of the United States response. Olsen's arguments, on the other hand, miss the progress that has been made in South Korea--Japan relations. It is more likely that the two nations will act in concert against North Korea should renewed fighting break out. However, Sakanaka provided some dilemmas presented to Japan should a war break out on the peninsula. He said there would be a political problem for Japan, as both South Korean and North Korean military air and sea craft in danger would seek refuge in Japan. A social problem would be caused by the millions of refugees from the peninsula, as well as Koreans now living in Japan. The domestic population would polarize over support for the war and the issue of United States forces using bases in Japan to launch attacks. For these and other reasons, Sakanaka said Japan must ensure no war breaks out in Korea, and he believes that withdrawing United States troops from Korea would undermine stability

in the area.<sup>44</sup>

The United States has had a vested interest in Northeast Asia's stability, as this region has become the leader in world economic growth, and has the potential to increase its lead into the next century.<sup>45</sup> Due to Cold War realities and presently for economic and diplomatic reasons, American influence has significantly shaped South Korea and Japan's military policies in the post-war era. During this period, the United States has made many policy decisions affecting the direction these countries would take and the role these countries would play in the international community. These decisions have had a significant impact on the stability of the region, and that impact has not always been favorable to the parties involved.

The presence of nuclear weapons and reliance on the Nixon Doctrine demanded the presence of the United States soldier at the front line of South Korea's defense. The presence of that soldier at the DMZ meant the United States would be forced to escalate any conflict with first use of nuclear weapons. The results of a renewed conflict would be devastating for North and South Korea, Japan, the United States, and many other nations as well. That conflict has not yet broken out is indeed fortunate. As journalist Jim Hoagland said of President Clinton's

strategy of maintaining the status quo, "It is impossible to work up much enthusiasm for soldiering on, or to ignore the real dangers it leaves in place. But as long as there is a chance to avoid war on the Korean peninsula, the Clinton administration is right to pursue it."<sup>46</sup>

The Asians feel that the status quo, however good it may be at this time, has been promulgated by the U.S. at the expense of Asian security. When the Japanese and Koreans made efforts to strengthen their own positions, the United States pressured them to desist. The argument for this pressure was that the United States would protect them. Instead, the commitment of the United States is questioned by the Asians, and North Korea has been successful in playing its alleged nuclear card.

If the United States had allowed rising nations such as South Korea and Japan the autonomy to proceed along their own course, today's situation would be different. Of course, the outcome could have been worse, but the responsibility for it would lie with sovereign nations who made decisions for their own people, not with a Western superpower whose track record and commitment have come under fire.

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## **CHAPTER IV**

### **Conclusion**

There are many reasons why the United States makes policy decisions. Factors in world politics are varied and too numerous to provide a complete list. To name a few, they can include domestic pressures, fiscal considerations, a changing international environment, and the personality of the policy makers. Certainly, most of the decisions reviewed in this thesis were influenced by some of these factors in addition to "myopic bilateralism" or American arrogance. The domestic and international situations are dynamic and every change requires a response. The personality of the leader influences the direction of America's foreign policy. What should be considered in concert with the primary issues is the effect these decisions will have on the countries involved.

This thesis began with a brief discussion of the relationship between the East and the West, showing how the attitude of the West and the United States in

particular has been perceived as insulting to the East. As the West encroached upon the East, the age of imperialism dawned. Many in the West applied a missionary spirit to "develop" the Orient. Others tried to "discover" the exotic elements of Asia depicted in the stories told about the Orient. In the postwar period, more assertive Asians began to express their feelings of offense. The backlash was articulated best by Edward Said and his followers, who believed Asia should be judged on its own terms and merits.

Against this backdrop, the decisions of the United States in military policy take on new importance. Ultimately, the United States has been concerned with stability in Northeast Asia, and its policies have been enacted toward achieving that goal. Having American troops present in Korea and Japan has, for the most part in that region, aided in the promotion of stability. One must keep in mind that the United States has been involved in three major wars in Asia in one generation, yet now "the Pacific has entered a fragile new era of peace."<sup>1</sup> This peace has allowed the economies of Northeast Asia to flourish and become world leaders in their own right. Economic development has been one of the factors that has brought several Asian nations "toward more open, more democratic political systems."<sup>2</sup>

While the United States has accomplished much for Asians in the postwar period, the concepts and expressions presented throughout this thesis still echo: "cultural imperialism," "arrogance," "myopic bilateralism," and "Orientalism." These terms are applicable across a broad spectrum of events and conditions, from popular culture to religion and politics. They are a component of every relationship between East and West, both at the national level and at the individual level.

Chapters two and three of this thesis are historical case studies that highlight instances of reduced attention to the concerns of those affected, the Asian nations. The implementation of the Nixon Doctrine was met with resistance and viewed as a sign of America's decreasing commitment to Northeast Asian security. President Carter's attempts to complete Nixon's withdrawal from Korea increased fears in Asia. Even President Bush followed the same course.

When South Koreans were feeling vulnerable because of the events in the 1970s, they made an effort to begin a defensive nuclear program. The Japanese have done the same. In what some consider an affront to their national sovereignty, the United States compelled both nations to forego such plans under the premise of non-proliferation

and Japan's non-nuclear principles. Yet the U.S. ignored those principles and sailed Navy ships armed with nuclear weapons into her harbors. (Granted, the Japanese government could be criticized for officially "ignoring" the occurrences.)

While there are many other relationships that can be studied, this thesis looked at the historical perspective regarding military policy decisions for Northeast Asia. Some other important areas include the impact of Western popular culture, the ramifications of the technology and communications booms, and the level of success of American-style democracy in Asia.

Of important note are some observations made recently by a study group sponsored by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. After many years of cooperation, the group found that "Western models are no longer ones Asians necessarily want to emulate."<sup>3</sup> However, the Asians still "value . . . the visible presence of American military forces" and believe "an abrupt American disengagement would . . . exacerbate insecurities that are already causing a number of Asian countries to strengthen their militaries."<sup>4</sup>

The study group found Sinor's concern about superficial cultural transfer still held true. Asians have come to America and made strong ties academically

and professionally, but "there has not been an equivalent extension of the American reach into Asia, and our knowledge of Asia remains strikingly inadequate."<sup>5</sup> The group offered the following recommendation to American policy makers:

While the United States, like Asian countries, must have a vigorous national agenda, we should be careful about putting forward sweeping initiatives that run counter to many Asian preferences for gradualism and evolution, exacerbating suspicions about our intentions and resentment over "American arrogance."<sup>6</sup>

In these issues, as well as others, the attitude of the West toward the East is important. One must avoid trying to define the Orient as something to be discovered, yet how else is knowledge attained? One must avoid classifying all the Orient as "different" from the West, but that is the reality. One must not consider "different" to mean "inferior," and that is the thrust of this thesis in its most concise wording. The United States naturally acts in its own best interests, but the concerns raised here are of increasing importance as Korea and Japan join America as leading economic and military powers. In the words of Robert Oxnam,

If Americans forget the historical perspective and act primarily out of single-issue domestic passions, the United States will suffer a backslide in its relations with key players in Asia. If, on the other hand, America can fashion an appropriate mix of security, trade, and human rights initiatives, based on genuine sensitivity to Asian views, .

. . then there will be a new U.S. Asia policy that may achieve not only substantive results but also renewed respect.<sup>7</sup>



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